

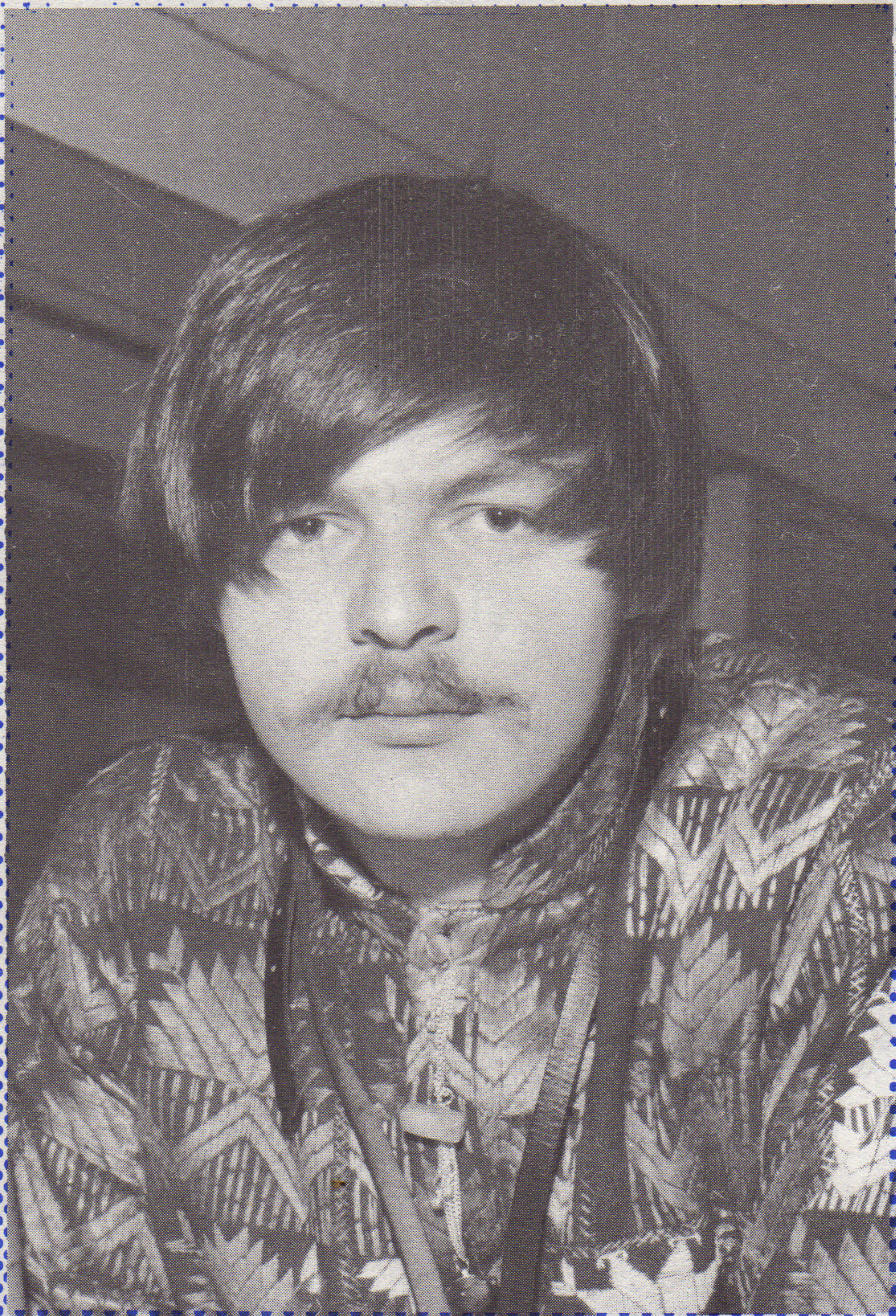
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Photograph by Valerie Wilmer



Photograph by David Redfern

COLEMAN HAWKINS

SUCH HAS been the toll amongst veteran musicians in 1968 that rather than include a monthly obituary column we had decided to cover this melancholy aspect of the jazz scene in a general retrospective feature for the year in our January 1970 issue. However, the death a few weeks ago of Coleman Hawkins cannot go unmentioned, for as long as any of us can remember Hawkins seemed an immutable part of the jazz world, with a recording career that spanned close on half a century. There is no need to extol Hawkins's greatness to readers of this magazine, for apart from an unhappy period in the late 'forties

and early 'fifties his stature has never been in doubt amongst either musicians or collectors. In the last few years of his life his frailness became apparent, but he modified his phrasing to meet the situation and anyone who heard his version of *September song*, featured on his final British tour, cannot fail to have been moved by his playing. Though alert to new jazz developments, and willing to incorporate those elements into his own playing that he considered valid, Hawkins's basic style remained constant over the years, and nobody who plays a tenor saxophone could be unaware of what they owe to him. Throughout his whole career Coleman Hawkins gave unstintingly of himself, sharing his art with audiences throughout the world — now that he is no longer with us he will be remembered with affection and respect by all who heard him, either in person or on record. As long as jazz survives so will his memory.



CHET BAKER

A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY / MICHAEL JAMES

IN RETROSPECT it seems that the brief popularity Chet Baker attained in the early 'fifties was engendered by examples of his music that were not altogether typical of him, or at least represented only a segment of the emotional spectrum he set out to cover. At all events he made few attempts to recapture in any methodical way the wistfulness that made *My funny valentine* (Fontana 688140ZL) both an aesthetic and financial success, and strove instead to play with a verve and starkness that reminded us a spell in one of Charlie Parker's groups was amongst his earliest professional jobs. A long-deleted album (Felsted PDL85008) which has his quartet interpreting a programme of Bob Zieff compositions accurately delineates the stance he had taken by 1955. It is one characterized above all by its asceticism. The polyrhythmic content that marked out the groups led by the chief innovators of the day, Max Roach and Art Blakey, is present only in attenuated form, but something of the tenseness of their music is conveyed to the listener by different means, chief amongst which are the harmonic density and unusual structuring of the material featured, the leader's vibratoless tone, and the curious rhythm section, in which Littman's razor-sharp cymbal beat vies with Twardzick's Monk-like phrasing to produce a suitably harsh backdrop for Baker's monochrome delivery. Hard bop the music is not, but it shared with that nascent form an unrepentant flavour which demonstrated that Baker was not going to be content with conforming to an established and publicly acceptable stereotype. The chief influence on Baker's own work was patently Miles Davies, an unfashionable enough figure at the time, and in fact at a concert I attended in Paris that autumn Baker went out of his way to acknowledge his admiration for this player; but even then it was clear that there was to be no facile duplicating of phrases.

Davis's example, there can be no doubt, was essentially a signpost to guide Baker to fuller self-expression, both on his own instrument and, less obviously, in the field of interaction within the musical group. That hypothesis, at any rate, finds further support in records Baker made after his return to the U.S.A. Two tracks included in a sampler entitled *The hard swing* (Vogue LAE12152) find him leading a group that has obvious bop affinities. Tenorist Phil Urso partners him in the front line and the rhythm section differs from that used on the European tour only in that Bobby Timmons has replaced Twardzick. In *Chippysin'*, a twelve-bar, one gets the impression that Baker's restricted technique in terms of melodic mobility hampers him in playing the type of involved line the complex rhythmic support calls for, though it must be conceded that he programmes his solo well; *Jumpin' off a clef* finds him solving that particular problem by using a series of short pecking notes and phrases, and is the more successful of the two tracks. Within the next year or two he had more commendable progress. His tone was stronger and his ability to execute a more intricate line far less suspect, as is shown by an album done in New York in September 1958 (Riverside RLP 12-281) on which he is partnered by tenor saxophonist Johnny Griffin and draws support from a rhythm team comprising Al Haig, Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones. This personnel, at the time of the record's release widely considered a bizarre choice, can now be seen as an eminently logical one in the light of the line of development Baker was taking.

REPORTS suggest that by the late 'fifties Baker's dependence on hard drugs had already undermined his career as a professional musician and was threatening to stifle his musical inventiveness. The pianist with his 1955 quartet, Dick Twardzick, had died in Paris during that tour, reputedly from an overdose of heroin, and this was apparently only the beginning of a series of disasters that led indirectly to Baker undergoing a self-imposed exile in Europe for some five years before his eventual return to the U.S.A. in March 1964. The odd news item that filtered through to the collector during this time indicated that he was alternating between episodes of dissipation and imprisonment; he was arrested in this country and also spent over a year in an Italian gaol. One might have been forgiven for imaging that the lyrical if immature talent which had illuminated those early recordings had finally run its course, yet the amazing fact is that from all these vicissitudes his skill and imaginative faculty eventually emerged not merely unscathed but actually augmented.

The American scene on which he made his reappearance in 1964 was vastly different from the one upon which he had turned his

back some five years earlier. Then, the post-bop style was at its zenith, both musically and in terms of public acceptance; the leading exponents in that style were making records regularly with a decisiveness and confidence that echoed the halcyon days of the late 'thirties. In the interim, not only had the jazz world changed radically, but the market itself had begun to shrink. New popularizers peddling tedious gospel devices were edging out the old, the swinging 4/4 beat as an essential of jazz had been cast into question, Rollins and McLean were toying with new improvisatory processes, and Ayler, Coleman and Cecil Taylor appeared to have jolted the jazz continuum far more brutally than their forerunners of the 'forties. In the midst of these confusions, Baker, with the same singlemindedness that had led him, a decade before, to quit the commercial possibilities implicit in the cool formula, drove blithely ahead along the post-bop route from which all the incidental traffic had by then smartly vanished.

The indefatigable Ira Gitler was assigned to cover Baker's first club date after his return and was obviously impressed. "His retention of his lyricism", he wrote, "the addition of greater strength, and his continuance as a stylist mark him as someone to hear at greater length, preferably with his own group". The trumpeter had by now abandoned that instrument for the fluegelhorn and Gitler also describes the favourable impression he made at the 1964 Newport Jazz Festival when he sat in with the Stan Getz quartet. The fluegelhorn's chief characteristic is its more mellow tonal propensity as compared with the smaller trumpet, and it may therefore seem surprising that Gitler should have emphasized the increased strength of Baker's work. Most trumpeters who have made the change, Art Farmer for instance, have capitalized on this aspect to project a softer, possibly more romantic feeling. Such was evidently not Baker's intent, as the records which followed confirmed, but it was conceivably not until the latter half of 1965, when he assembled a group to record, at two long sessions, enough music to fill five albums, that the extent to which he had matured as an all-round musician was brought home to the collector. These records, details of which are quoted at the end of this article, certainly do stress the additional force, the hardness, if you like, to which Gitler had already referred, but, perhaps more important, they also show that the strength of his music rested firmly on more intricate foundations in terms of his evident familiarity with the harmonic and rhythmic language of the post-bop idiom and the ease with which he could by now infuse into that demanding dialect the personal brand of lyricism that had marked out his work as an intimately personal mode of expression even in the earliest days, when its technical lapses had to be hidden by careful tape editing.

ALTHOUGH none of the players Baker picked for his supporting cast had achieved a commercial reputation, they were all of them long-serving professionals, endowed with a thoroughgoing knowledge of their selected idiom, and thus appropriate stablemates for this particular meeting. To partner him in the front line he chose George Coleman, the Memphis tenorman who had made his name with Max Roach and had subsequently toured widely with Miles Davis. His tough, occasionally nasal tone, allied to a melodic amalgam compounded of many personal turns of phrase as well as elements drawn from Rollins, Mobley and Coltrane, proved an ideal second voice, highlighting as it did the leader's equally mobile but often more tender statements. The rhythm section, ex-Detroiters all, evinced

Discographical Notes

THE TWO sessions that gave rise to these five albums were held on August 23rd and 25th, 1965.

No information is available as to which session individual items derive from. The personnel has been given in the body of the article. Catalogue numbers of records, their titles and contents are as follows. Only the first was issued in England.

Prestige PR7449 — SMOKIN' WITH THE CHET BAKER QUINTET
Grade "A" gravy :: Serenity :: Fine and dandy :: Have you met Miss Jones :: Rearin' back :: So easy

Prestige PR7460 — GROOVIN' WITH THE CHET BAKER QUINTET

Madison Avenue :: Lonely star :: Wee, too :: Tan gaugin :: Cherokee :: Bevan beeps

Prestige PR7478 — COMIN' ON WITH THE CHET BAKER QUINTET

Comin' on :: Stairway to the stars :: No fair lady :: When you're gone :: Choose now :: Chabootie :: Carpsie's groove

Prestige PR7496 — COOL BURNIN' WITH THE CHET BAKER QUINTET

Hurry :: I waited for you :: The 490 :: Cut plug :: Boudoir :: Etude in three :: Sleeping Susan

Prestige PR7512 — BOPPIN' WITH THE CHET BAKER QUINTET

Go-go :: Lament for the living :: Pot luck :: Bud's blues :: Romas :: On a misty night

the type of integration one associates only with a working group, though in fact the sole prelude to these recordings was a limited number of studio rehearsals. Rather than attribute this cohesion to their common geographical origin, I have been led by repeated playings of the records to ascribe it to the resourcefulness and sheer musicianship of the men concerned. Behind the drumkit say Roy Brooks, whose work will doubtless be familiar to many readers by way of his fine series of recordings as a member of the Horace Silver quintet. The driving power and polyrhythmic richness of his contributions to so exciting an album as *Doin' the thing* (Blue Note BLP4076) claim the listener's attention with equal persistence throughout these sets. The bassist, Herman Wright, eschewing extended solos, concentrates primarily on an adhesive role, laying down the idiom's classic ground beat with a style and surety reminiscent of Paul Chambers. The pianist, Kirk Lightsey, draws in the section upon extremely useful experience garnered as accompanist to Sarah Vaughan and Damita Jo, but reveals more genuine inventiveness in his solo choruses. The influence of such dissimilar stylists as Wynton Kelly and Lennie Tristano may be noted in his constructions but the overall impression retained is of a man who, if at times deficient in self-discipline, nevertheless evinces a resourcefulness and sheer joy in his playing that predisposes one to overlook that none too grievous fault. With men of this calibre to back him, Baker could be sure that there would be no question of them merely filling in time, and that even when he stepped back from the microphone the level of interest would remain wellnigh constant.

SINCE IT IS my aim in writing this article to spotlight certain salient features in Baker's music rather than to try to provide a detailed description of the proceedings at these two sessions, no useful purpose would be served by a detailed commentary on each item set down, but a few notes on the types of themes employed do help depict his taste in material as well as indicate his basic allegiance to the central jazz tradition. The programme comprises a restricted number of slow tempo

features, of which *Lonely star* and *Lament for the living* are excellent examples, and in these Baker exhibits the delicacy and lyrical tone long-standing admirers of his playing would expect to hear. By far in the majority, though, are the medium and fast excursions; a few of these, notably *Fine and dandy* and *Cherokee*, are established evergreens, but they are heavily outnumbered by the jazz originals, and it is in these items, broadly speaking, that he makes his most profound impression on the listener. He is especially good in straightforward medium-groove pieces like Gene Ammons's *Chabootie*, and the preponderance of such basic yet unhackneyed themes, of which *Pot luck*, *Grade "A" gravy* and *Carpsie's groove* are altogether representative, indicates that Baker well knew what he was about and was accorded the freedom of choice he needed to project his music in the most effective way. An additional bonus in these five albums is the inclusion of so many compositions by the late Tadd Dameron: readers will be familiar with such old favourites as *Choose now*, *So easy* and *On a misty night*, but others, for example *The 490 Romas* and *Bevan beeps*, have not received the exposure they merit.

Baker's work at these sessions was not devoid of weaknesses. In *Tan gaugin*, for instance, his playing sounds strained, as though his lip was faltering. His pitching in some of the ballads is uncertain enough to offend the purist. Sometimes, too, as in *Boudoir*, he fails to bring his stint to a telling conclusion, like the orator, who covers a lot of ground but somehow never drives any of his points home. These shortcomings, however, are merely incidental. They are no more than by-products of his deep commitment to the credo of improvisation, from which derive the cardinal attractions of his music, namely its emotionalism, rhythmic zest and melodic enterprise. Though his solo in *Madison Avenue*, to take a case in point, is not flawless technically, the excitement he stirs up as he rides decisively over Brook's myriad accents would be beyond the reach of many a more polished musician. In contrast, *Bevan beeps* finds him colouring his picture in the softest of hues, conjuring figures of a ballerina-like grace from Dameron's rich material. On the blues, too, he is thoroughly at home, and *Bud's blues* must be accounted one of his outstanding successes in this

vein, a finely-etched illustration of his flair for dynamics as he moves from the restrained confidences of his opening phrases to the declarative passages that bring his solo here to such a moving close. That Baker was able to achieve remarkable fluency in the post-bop idiom at so late a stage of its development without being at all influenced by the trumpeters it threw up may at first seem to be rather surprising, but it should be remembered that as an expatriate he was insulated from the work of Byrd, Morgan, Hubbard and so on when these men were very much in the jazz public's eye. The upshot was that no new mentor supplanted Davis in his affections, and listening to these albums one finds it hard to detect links with any of the idiom's younger stars. Occasionally a turn of phrase or the inflexion of a note will put one in mind of Dizzy Reece, but this must surely be no more than a quirk of fate, a coincidence, if you like, in that both men were in some degree touched by Davis's magic in their formative years. By the time he came to make these records Baker was very much his own man, and there is a maturity about the scope and incisiveness of his playing that speaks eloquently of his devotion to his music and his enthusiasm to infuse into it the quintessence of his experience.

IN HIS NOTES to one of these five records Jack McKinney refers to Baker's having undergone "a decade of frustration found at the point of a hypodermic needle". This, indeed, is hard fact rather than sensationalism, and sadly it must be recorded that the last news I have of his career is that he was once again arrested in early 1966 in connexion with narcotic offences. If there is any consolation to be found in all this, it is that through the years of successive nightclubs, prison cells and hospital wards Baker was able to keep before him a vision of beauty that continued to find expression in his music even if it seemingly had little or no place in the rest of his life. It is the retention of that vision and its sparkling transposition into musical terms that make these five records so eminently valuable. Fifteen years ago it was pardonable to mistake Baker's identity as a jazz player of substance; today, in the light of the recorded evidence, there can be no excuse for that error.

THE COOL GIRLS

Loudly before many insubstantial voices
had had their finicky say
with big paws of music he most lovingly
destroyed a joy and with it us as
(according to some primordial
spiritual plan) magnetic air sucked
red lips and silver bells.

In midnight magnitude he dared
his dream of at least one volcanic
apocalypse and we
laved at his spring of arctic fire sang
our ache sophisticate:

Hopscotch and hickory-switch
and that old purgatorial itch.

Meaningly as we mooned
he danced sweet love to us.

Music achieved explosive integration
lit by deathly delights. We oozed
our thin beauty to charge the hungry
web of the world
and only fell on silence when
his bright bragging
orchestral agony had
defined its origin
and end.

ERIC THACKER

According to 'Down Beat' critics, Milford Graves is the drummer most deserving of wider recognition, yet Graves's only live appearance in 1968 was with Albert Ayler at the Newport Jazz Festival. Examples of his recorded work are relatively few although he is one of ESP's most-recorded artists, and very few New York musicians other than those who have worked with him have heard of Milford Graves, let alone heard him play. Nevertheless, Graves has made an impact in the avant-garde arena.

Maintaining himself with employment outside music, most of the 26 years old drummer's spare time is spent working-out with pianist Don Pullen. The duo also operate a record label, SRP (it stands for Self-Reliance Program), and have produced one recording of a concert they played at Yale University. There are plans for future releases and more concerts. I asked Graves, a quiet and serious individual, how working with the aggressive Ayler compared to the interaction of the duo.



MILFORD GRAVES TO VALERIE WILMER

I'D PLAYED with Albert twice previously but this Newport thing was it. It worked out alright but I have no preference for the number of musicians involved. The problem is the quality - that determines what it's going to be. The duo doesn't necessarily give you more freedom. The dynamics change, that's all, and this was just as rewarding. I want complete freedom from a natural standpoint, by which I mean obeying the self a little more. I only want to be free to respond and react according to what's around me at that moment without any sort of outside interference. By that I mean that I don't want somebody to present me with an idea based on a lot of externalism and tell me 'this is how you must react'.

I feel as though any composer is writing his music from something that's motivating or influencing him. I feel like he's definitely reacting to the feelings of his body and mind so that when somebody hands you something that is based on *their* feelings and tries to tell you to feel the same way that *they* felt, it's like you're ignoring yourself. It's up to the musician himself to respond to whatever influences him.

Has Albert Ayler influenced you on the occasions you've worked together?

I CAN ONLY go my own way when I'm by myself because then I'll be influencing myself. When I'm with someone else I can't say that it's my way, I can only say it's like the way I'm being taken.

Although you are searching for complete freedom in your playing do you ever consider your course of improvisation to any degree?

NOT NOW, but during the stages when you're developing there are things that consists of patterns which I did because I thought this was reality; This was before I started playing free. I knew I was faced with the external world as something on the outside, so I was just going through a period of understanding the principles which was, in turn, only done to understand myself on a conscious level.

Do you discuss freedom and technique with other drummers?

NOT ON A LEVEL that is really involved, so I really can't say how they, (the others), feel. I

think that anybody who reaches this very high state of concentration and vision where you're playing on a very spontaneous improvisational level, it does something to you when you play. This is not organised music, it is definitely responding on impulse to what is happening at the moment. You don't always remember distinctly what happened and your playing might appear to you like a fog. You can't see what happened but you can definitely feel something. It's some reward and it makes you feel good. This is something you can't explain, it goes beyond talking. I find that a lot of musicians are beginning to feel this thing and you can't talk about it except to say what not to do.

So, what not to do?

SPEAKING FROM a percussion standpoint, the drummer will have to study the instrument much more than he ever did before. When I say that, I mean that you can play on a drum-pad all day, you can put years in on drum-pads, but why put 99% on the drum-pad and only 1% on the drum-set? They're two different things. You have to determine between what you can play on the pavement and what you can play on the drums.

What should drummers concentrate on today?

THE ONLY THING they're worried about mostly is the rhythm, but the drum itself is producing a lot of sound. It's a sound that they're not actually controlling, it's coming out by itself. The thing that the drummer will have to do from now on is to spend 99% of the time on the drums. The way I see it, if drummers really want to understand their instrument, they will have to put away their drum-pad.

How much do you practice?

ACTUALLY, it's a job in itself just to study the membrane. I put in the amount of time that my body and mind allows me to, I have no set time. Sometimes I can start playing - by the way, I don't call it practising - I'll take a look at the clock and maybe half an hour went by and I'll find that I've energised my body to such a degree until I feel as though there's no need for me to continue. It's all according to the energy output. You reach a point where your body is so energised that physically you have to slow your metabolism down.



What satisfaction can you get from playing in private when jazz has always been an outgoing music, never a selfish one?

THERE ARE two types of communication, outward and inward. When I'm having the inward communication it's not neglect or not wanting to be around people on the outside, it's a stage where I'm rewarding myself and I think it will keep me together. But as far as like playing to the people, I would do it much more than I'm doing now if it was up to me. It's not, though, it's up to the producers, promoters, etc. One thing I can say now is that SRP will shortly be producing our own concerts here on the East Coast.

Doesn't lack of work frustrate you?

WE HAVE A WAY that we can communicate among ourselves and a way we can stimulate ourselves. The audience or the money will not be the main factor

that will determine our survival. I think that's been the failure of a lot of musicians. I've seen a lot of people go out with the desire to make records and to travel and get the admiration of the public, but when this desire is not fulfilled, they're really hung-up. It's very hard to fill this without going through a lot of changes and I feel as though a lot of musicians weren't really prepared for this when they went out there. They were so busy taking their music and giving it out, out, out, that they really didn't know the *value* of the music. What we're doing is taking the music to benefit ourselves.

Isn't that rather selfish?

THIS IS NOT like saying we don't care about the people, this is just that we want to keep ourselves *together*, to protect ourselves. Right now we're playing in privacy

and I'm surviving off my savings. Sure, it's pretty rugged, but what you gonna do?

What would you do if you were forced to stop playing tomorrow?

DON'T THINK anything would happen. I've prepared myself for that. I've turned down a lot of commercial opportunities and a lot of chances to make money and it hasn't affected me in any way. This is discipline to keep myself in tune. To play in this free state these things are a necessity.

You said once that you would like to go to Africa to study the drum at its source. What plans have you made?

I'VE BEEN thinking about travel but I'll just have to wait until the opportunity comes along. It's important for me to go some time, though, because of understanding the drum. You have to understand its construction and its possibilities and this is where my respect for the African conception of the drum lies. It's the same thing with the Indian drum. I've studied tabla here in New York with Mathanta Singh, and these people really have taken the drumskin and studied a lot of the possibilities of sound extraction and thereby gained control over repetitious duplication of these sounds.

Could you explain how an understanding of the actual membrane would improve your control over the instrument?

YOU HAVE TO understand the physical aspects of the thing itself as far as the size of the skin, its thickness and flexibility. You have to know where and how to stretch it and the various points where the tone of the sound can be changed. The drum's body is important, too, but the major factor is the drummer.

A lot of drummers will play with the sticks always at one, two or maybe three heights from the skin. In other words their attack and the amount of pressure of actually hitting would vary but mostly the *actual* pressure on the skin would remain the same, the only difference being whether you let the stick rebound or let the stick hit the skin and you stop the vibrations. The Africans have their way of doing this, too, but the main thing is that they have a thorough understanding of the angle of attack.

What kind of drumkit do you play?

IT'S A COMBINATION of Slingerland and Gretsch which I bought already used. I've changed it around and taken a lot of pieces off, though, removed anything that

has a tendency to absorb sound. That's why it appears to look naked at times! I don't use a snare and the most basic destroyer of sound is double-heads. The lower head does nothing but absorb sound so that it's closed in, so I only use one head on all the drums. You can get a much bigger, richer sound that way.

I usually use hide but right now I've got a plastic head which most drummers don't realise I'm using because of the way I treat it. You have to condition the skin. With most drummers you'll notice one little area where it's black and this is the only area that they're playing on, the rest is clean. So this means that the drummer is only getting his most structural vibrations out of the part he's hitting, the places where the skin is still stiff do not respond to these vibrations, he's not extracting anything and that's a whole area that's being wasted.

What other new techniques do you use?

DO CERTAIN things with my hands alone and then I have different stick techniques. I don't use the sticks in one position in my hand, I go through a whole series of different grips. This presents a psychological adjustment of the mind first of all, and this will automatically change the overall approach to music. This will in turn alter the sound and there are a lot of other things you can do this way that you can't do in the conventional way.

Just how free can you possible play?

SOME PEOPLE talk of freedom but they're playing what they *think* they should play. You can't go into freedom without conditioning yourself. If you've been living a certain way for twenty years and then all of a sudden you come out and say that you want to be free, it doesn't work because you're fighting yourself. Really there's so much involved internally that it's like being controlled by your sub-conscious self, deeper things of which you're not aware.

It's nerve-energy and learning how to respond to your nerves. When the musicians who can understand this type of freedom get together, we get a reward but it's nothing you can analyse. It elevates you to maybe survive better in life. There's a different rhythm of the self that a lot of people are not aware of, but when you condition and train yourself it can come about at any time. Don Pullen and myself are like this, we motivate each other. But what we do calls for deep understanding of the instrument itself and years and years of just studying the possibilities of sound.

FOR LADY DAY

Saw you once, only once,
that last tour of Europe, on TV

Your voice lagged
cracked with pain
becoming old & harsh
like the song goes
But Beautiful

No one mourned so well the death of love
Your voice contained
the anguish of your race & sex

It cut like Bird a knife
across the lush strings
of your last LP

It burned for love
in some other spring

The voice of silence
of lovers left behind

Bars where it's always quarter to three
No longer a young girl's voice
Prez & Teddy weaving with it — —
but sound of pain in an endless night.

Now strangers, listening, grow sad
(they hear themselves,

when down & kicked)
because your voice never disguised
sadness endured.

Rape, Love for sale.
Drug agony, and worse,
In washrooms. In dancehalls.
On dance tours. During hard white dawns.

No one can make amends.
You lived these things
yet sang love back
for black & white

your songs, too late, their own.

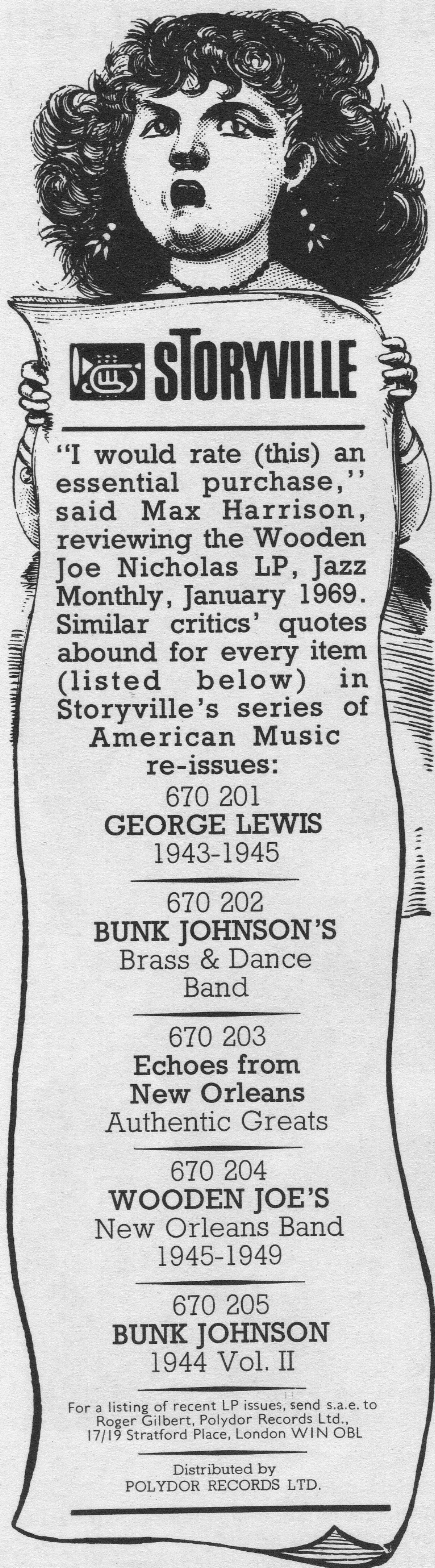
WHO IT WAS that had the inspiration to invite Lowell Fulson to tour in England I'm not sure, but it was a great idea. He is far less well-known among British audiences, even by reputation, than say Otis Rush or T-Bone Walker, but he is very suited to current trends in home-grown blues. As it happens there's a couple of albums of Lowell Fulson's work available, including a recent one on Polydor. There was once half an album on Heritage, and there's a fine collection on Arhoolie, but I imagine few of his audiences would have known of them. Nevertheless to my surprise and Fulson's too, many of his blues were obviously familiar to a number of his listeners, and their enthusiastic calls for request items were doubtless encouraging to him. He appeared at the Marquee Club, 100 Oxford Street and Klook's Kleek in London, so blues enthusiasts had a good chance to hear him. With him was Steve Miller's "Delivery", a blues band which turned in some very competent accompaniments. Prophets without honour? Well, hardly, but it was interesting to see a passing reference to Steve Miller in *Rolling Stone*. "I wish I had them Stateside", Fulson remarked to me, with genuine enthusiasm for his supporting group.

After a warm-up session from the Delivery which was quite acceptable, and an uncomfortable inept one, let alone deafeningly loud, from the "Sam-Apple Pie" — whoever *they* are — Lowell Fulson came on. No waste of time; like all professional blues entertainers he waded straight in. On stage he weaves and turns, swings and rocks to his own music. His movements are easy and unaffected, very much a part of his total projection. Wearing a bright blue suit of a kind of art silk flowered material, self-coloured, and with the almost mandatory ornamental pendant on a thin chain round his neck, he looked very much the modern-image bluesman. With red-tinged and coiffed hair, moustache, and a fine line of beard running from below his lower lip under his chin, in a sort of upside-down Iroquois haircut, he obviously upset some ideas of what a blues singer *ought* to look like. He flashed gold teeth when he smiled, which was frequently, slightly downward at the corners; he puckered his eyebrows, nodded in affirmation as he sang or talked his way through his songs. It was a genuine taste of the West Coast blues club singer, with no false folksiness.

When he sang he had a warmer voice than on record, with a greater range and more depth. Curiously he can sometimes sound thin and rather high on disc, but his actual singing voice is more direct, dropping to richer tones when he is more conversational. Several of his songs are cante-fables, with spoken descriptive passages alternating with verses, rather like Jack Dupree, but with less obvious humour. His first item was almost his first recorded blues, which he made originally twenty-three years ago, *You're Going to Miss Me When I'm Gone*. Another, *I'm Wild About You Baby*, also dates from the late 'forties; they sound fresh and effective today, showing how advanced he was at that time. There was big applause when he broke into *Black Nights*, great enthusiasm as he hit the first notes of *Reconsider Baby*, for which there were shouted requests a number of times. Apparently the Checker and Kent items were known to quite a few. Fulson's guitar playing was fast and deft, reminiscent of T-Bone without the gimmicks; no one-hand, over the head playing, but lucid and often adventurous arpeggios. He came back for three encores to a very appreciative audience.



BACK IN his hotel Lowell Fulson was generally happy, and dissatisfied only with the cramped quarters. No bath and two flights of stairs to the nearest W.C. hardly came into the luxury treatment. But unlike many blues singers he is not inhibited by strange places. Even seasoned travellers like Josh White or Mahalia Jackson are likely to remain tied to their curtained hotel rooms, but not Fulson, who is out early to walk in Queensway or Hyde Park. He'd seen quite a bit



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"I would rate (this) an essential purchase," said Max Harrison, reviewing the Wooden Joe Nicholas LP, Jazz Monthly, January 1969. Similar critics' quotes abound for every item (listed below) in Storyville's series of American Music re-issues:

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1943-1945

670 202

BUNK JOHNSON'S
Brass & Dance
Band

670 203

Echoes from
New Orleans
Authentic Greats

670 204

WOODEN JOE'S
New Orleans Band
1945-1949

670 205

BUNK JOHNSON
1944 Vol. II

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of London — shown round by an American whom he'd met in a bar of a Bayswater pub. It all added up to a confidentially professional musician who had come a long way from playing guitar for Texas Alexander in Oklahoma juke joints. He is now forty-eight and has had an eventful career since he began playing with Dan Wright's String Band when he was seventeen. After playing for Texas Alexander, whom he still recalls with mingled awe and affection, he was drafted into the U.S. Navy, seeing service first in Southern California and later in Guam. On his discharge he settled in Oakland and shortly after, made his first records for Bob Geddins.

Several years on the West Coast found him working with Charles Brown, Johnny and Oscar Moore, and other blues singers who had made a reputation there. From the Moore brothers he learned a lot and a stint with T-Bone Walker gave him a model for his guitar playing. He seems to have been more aware than most singers of recorded music generally and jazz included. "I always liked that Jimmy Lunceford and Bill Basie music and I thought I'd get me a road band, and I was going to have me a *good* one. So I had Earl Brown, alto, Floyd Montgomery on bass; Then I had Eddie Piper, Stanley Turrentine on tenor. I had Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis, and Frank McClure on bass, and Bob Ford on baritone sax. Earl Brown he was *bad* — he could dance! Man, he danced with that sax, and he was like a little worm on stage! He and me, we did an act together; They were all good musicians, so I didn't play too much guitar with them. Not at first, not till I'd studied a bit."

These were obviously days on which Lowell Fulson looked back with nostalgia. "They were *bad*, I mean they were *terrible* times. Things were pretty noisy for me then, pretty *noisy*" he emphasised with those odd superlatives that blues singers have used since the 'twenties. "We toured — we did theatre dates, we did the Apollo, we went right through the Carolinas and the Virginias. Shaw booking agency did all the bookings — all we did was get there and play. Ben Waller was my agent before. Now it's Dan Boone, because all the Shaws are dead, mother, father and son."

It seems that Lowell Fulson had two large bands at least and a little work might sort out their personnels in more detail. They were running in the early 'fifties, when Fulson was also experimenting with larger groups on record. Earl Brown, the alto player, was with him on a large number of records made at the time, and a couple *Cash Box Boogie* and *There Is a Time For Everything* are on Arhoolie R2003. Probably the best impression of the kind of band may be gained from the Polydor International issue 423.250 "The Blues Came Rollin' In." *Cold Hearted Mama* in particular, is a swinging band item with good, typical guitar by Fulson and the shouting, slightly "hip" vocal that he favoured. Other titles with a full band, like *The Blues Come Rollin' In*, have a slightly sentimental overtone, and blues enthusiasts are likely to be drawn to the somewhat earlier sessions with the excellent pianist Eldridge McCarthy, with Lloyd Glenn or Jay McShann.

Listening today to Lowell Fulson singing *Let Me Ride In Your Automobile* one realises that he has a great deal to offer as a blues singer still. Whether he is at present under contract to Kent I'm not sure, but it seems to me that there's a very good session waiting to be recorded. Records though, are no substitute for live performances. In general, Lowell Fulson's appearances in Britain were well attended, although, as he said, "We weren't breakin' no *Laws*". He's scheduled to come again in November this year. Try and hear him.

Brother Beware

"WILL YOU please cancel my subscription to *Memory Lane*. Sorry but it is incompatible with my form of worship, which forbids idolatry, or creative worship in any form, and the status granted certain artists of the past in *Memory Lane* is too near the border-line for me to take 'chances'. So then, it must be goodbye from . . . V. I have just destroyed £20 worth of 78's myself."

(From *Memory Lane*, Vol.1 (Nos.3) — May 1969)

THE TITLE of this feature is self-explanatory. It will be open to specialists in various fields to present information on recordings, both general and discographical, with a bias towards areas that are not regularly covered in other parts of the magazine.

Our first contributor is Alasdair Fenton, an ardent researcher into the 'hot' recordings of British dance bands, though his musical interests are wide and include jazz proper. Mr. Fenton, who has a collection of over 4000 78s mostly of the 'twenties and 'thirties, is a frequent contributor to such magazines as R.S.V.P. and Memory Lane, and at present his complete discography of Jack Hylton is being serialised in the former. It is planned that he will provide the material for this feature on a roughly bi-monthly basis.

Because none of the titles mentioned by Mr. Fenton in this first piece have been reissued and can be found only by enthusiastic junkshoppers or scanners of auction lists, record release numbers have not been given. However, this information will be included in future if there is a request for it. Next month I will take over the column for a discussion of some recordings by lesser known big bands of the 'twenties and 'thirties.

(Editor)

LOOKING BACK to the beginning of jazz in this country it seems to be generally agreed that it really started with the arrival, just after the first world war, of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band to these shores. From that beginning, and indeed right up to the "you never had it so good" days of the early 'fifties — surprisingly enough, for jazz the famous phrase was probably true — the United States has been the teacher and Britain one of its brighter pupils. The latter description is no exaggeration, for most jazz historians seem to overlook the fact that outside the States the music initially took root and progressed more steadily in this country than elsewhere.

It is true that in the early 'twenties and up until around 1928-29, most bands of note had either American leaders or a partial Ameri-

can personnel. However, as a result of this lack of overall jazz talent, the bulk of British bands had to concentrate on a more sedate, yet danceable, style which made them leaders in the European scene of the time. In most instances the British dance bands of the period, in their style and conception, outplayed their equivalent American hotel and society orchestras.

The distinction contained in the final sentence of the above paragraph is deliberate, for in reference works British bands are usually classified as 'commercial' while their American counterparts are often grouped under a 'hot dance music' heading. As a result many of the American bands appear in the jazz discographies while British groups are omitted, a situation that has led to little information becoming available on 'hot' recordings by British bands. It is the intention of this writer, over a period of time, to draw attention to many interesting jazz or jazz-inclined recordings by British groups that *Jazz Monthly* might otherwise overlook.

As in the U.S.A., in the recording studios even the most unlikely bands made a brief sojourn into the realms of jazz, especially if a jazz orientated number happened to become a current 'hit' of the day. Nearly every dance band in Britain has played or recorded at some time or another La Rocca's classic *Tiger rag*, sometimes with surprising results, though the craze for this number did not become widespread until the 'thirties, while our survey begins before this.

With the opening of the Hammersmith Palaise De Danse in 1919, and dancing becoming the 'in' vogue, other establishments devoted to the pastime soon sprung up. Among these was the "Queen's Hall Roof" in Langham Place, where a small seven piece orchestra played nightly on the roof garden. The relief pianist there was Jack Hylton, and as he was the only person who could read music he orchestrated a popular song of the day titled *I/a*, following which he became a regular member of the band and wrote all their arrangements.

On May 28th, 1921, the band went to Hayes, their fee being £5 a man for the session, but Hylton felt he should have more for his orchestrations and with the other members of the group objecting to the suggestion a compromise was evolved. It was agreed that the words "directed by Jack Hylton" should appear on the label of those recordings by the Queen's Dance Orchestra that were issued on HMV, but Jack also used the same group for titles that were released on Zonophone and these appeared as by Jack Hylton's Jazz Band. In later years, of course, Hylton was to become the leader of Britain's premier show band — hardly one that made many recordings in a jazz vein — but during the formative years between 1921 and 1925, as a result of interest in the 'new' music and the influence of the O.D.J.B., he recorded many jazz numbers. The position for collectors is confused somewhat by the fact that the Zonophone discs were labelled 'Jazz Band' though they also included commercial performances of hits of the day, while the Queen's titles on HMV include a few in the jazz idiom.



QUEEN'S DANCE ORCHESTRA—1921: R. Stamp (trombone) J. Rosen (violin); Al Jenkins (alto); B. Bosset (banjo); W. Abbey (drums); Jack Hylton (piano); B. Heath (trumpet)

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FOLLOWING the initial session of May 1921 the band returned to the studios on July 8th, where under the 'Jazz' title they made *Wang wang blues*, released on Zonophone 2167. The next three jazz titles to be cut all came out of the Queen's sessions, comprising the Hylton original *Trombone cocktail*, *Bullfrog patrol* and the first version of *Limehouse blues*. Most of Hylton's compositions were in the commercial style of the day, but this recording of October 4th shows some nice touches. *Bullfrog patrol*, written by Jerome Kern, seems an unlikely jazz vehicle, but the arrangement by pianist Claude Ivy was really remarkably good, the band entering softly before building up very strongly prior to a more subdued ending. This recording took place on November 15th, 1921, the clarinetist-saxist on the date being a Creole, Al Jenkins, who did much to enhance the value of these early titles.

By August 16th, 1922, when *Limehouse blues* was recorded, Jenkins had been replaced by Chappie D'Amato, but in the following month Hylton again waxed this title, for the last of the Zonophone 'Jazz Band' sessions. The date also produced versions of *Dear old Southland* and Zez Confrey's *Stumbling*. In January 1923 Hylton began his final series of recordings for the Zonophone label, this time to be issued as the Grosvenor Dance Orchestra, three jazz titles resulting — *Hot lips*, the tune that made Henry Busse famous with Paul Whiteman, *Runnin' Wild* and *Seven or eleven blues*, the recording dates of these being January 9th, June 12th and August 27th respectively.

By this time the Hylton band had left the 'Queen's' and was playing for dancing at the Grafton Galleries. It was now a ten piece unit, its personnel including Jack Raine (trumpet), Lew Davis (trombone), Johnny Rosen (violin) and Basil Wiltshire (drums). Recordings were now issued exclusively under Hylton's name on the HMV label, and on September 3rd the band again recorded *Seven or eleven blues* at the same session as an excellent *Louisville Lou*. The following day *Broadway blues* was recorded, and by the end of the month Hylton had made four other 'blues' titles — *Russian blues* (written by Noel Coward!), *House of David blues*, *Blue grass blues* and *Blue trot blues*. On February 4th, 1924, Hylton recorded a novelty item, *Syncopation on the brain*, but from then on concentrated on more or less entirely commercial numbers, though in later years he was to occasionally feature jazz musicians of the calibre of Phillipe Brun and to record jazz performances which will be considered at another time.

Rivalling the popularity of the Hylton band were the two Savoy groups. In 1923, after two trial broadcasts, one from the Carlton Hotel, the BBC began relaying music from the Savoy Hotel, the selection of the venue helped by the fact that it was not too far from the 2LO studios at Savoy Hill. The broadcasts became extremely popular with listeners, and although both were hotel bands they made a number of excellent jazz-orientated recordings. The smaller of the two bands was the Savoy Havana led by Bert Ralton, an American who had brought his New York Havana band over in 1921 and had remained to form a British group. The personnel included a fine trumpeter, Jimmy Wornell, trombonist Bernard Tipping (he had moved over from Hylton's band), fellow American Van Phillips on reed, Reggie Batten on violin, and Billy Mayerl on piano. It seems that 1923 was the year of the 'blues' in London and, like the Hylton band, the Havana unit recorded a number of them. On November 3rd they committed no fewer than four to wax — *Farewell blues*, *Blue hoosier blues*, *Downhearted blues* and *Henpecked blues*. One of their finest recordings from this period was *Headin' for Louisville*, with an arrangement believed to have been written by Lew Stone.

IT'S SOME TIME since the last "Postscript" appeared, partly due to pressure on space and partly due to pressure on me. In the intervening period, as well as having a few ideas, I have amassed a certain amount of discographical information so, if this looks like a special "Collectors' Postscript", it's not because I'm trying to cut Alun Morgan, but because I feel "Collectors' Notes" is more probably reserved for non-regular contributors and, in any case, most of the following is so fragmentary that it is better dealt with in the form of jottings.

In fact, as a gesture of co-operation with Alun, I'll begin by continuing his corrections to Jepsen's *Jazz Records 1942-1962*, with particular reference to MEL TORME. Two entries on pp.80-1 of Jepsen's Vol.8 should be rewritten as follows:-

MEL TORME (vcl) acc orchestra conducted by Wally Stott-1,
Geoff Love-2, Tony Osborne-3 London — 1960

Stranger in town-3 Vrv MG V(6)8440, HMV CLP1584, CSD
1442

You and the night and the music-2 as above plus Vrv V(6)8593
I guess I'll have to change my plan-1 as above minus Vrv V(6)
8593

Born to be blue-3 as above

County fair-1 as above

Dancing in the dark-3 as above

By myself-2 as above

Christmas song-1 as above plus Vrv V(6)8593, MGM(E)1144

Alone together-1 as above minus Vrv V(6)8593, MGM(E)1144

Shine on your shoes-2 as above plus MGM(E)1144

And about FRANK SINATRA, I have a note originating from a contemporary *Melody Maker* and concerning the album "Come Fly With Me" on Capitol W920 (Jepsen, Vol.7, p.159) to the effect that the track *On the road to Mandalay* was withdrawn following bitter complaints from the executors of Rudyard Kipling! This item was replaced on the album by a reissue of *It happened in Monterey* (recorded January 12, 1956) and, while this is certainly the case with all British issues, I believe it's also true of the American issues.

The life-blood of discographers, of course, used to be alternate takes, which are still turning up by the dozen on 78 reissues, but they are understandably rarer in the LP era because unwanted tape can always be reused. However, to my surprise, I believe I've discovered an alternate take of RAY CHARLES's *What'd I say*: the version on Atlantic LP8054 ("Do The Twist With R.C.") contains extra instrumental choruses, but otherwise is pretty much identical to the original issues of the February 18, 1959 performance. It is conceivable that the original issue, in fact, was just a shortened version of this one (the definition of an "alternate take" necessarily becomes more vague when tape is involved) but it sounds more like another performance from the same session. Some titles were recorded more than once for Atlantic (hence a couple of errors in Jepsen, Vol.2, pp.293-7), so here are the full contents of LP8054:- *Heartbreaker* (mat. A1067), *Leave my woman alone* (A2000), *You be my baby* (A2970), *I got a woman* and *Talkin' 'bout you* (July 5, 1958), *Tell me how do you feel* (A3196), *What'd I say* (A3263/4), *Tell the truth* (A4375) and *I'm movin' on* (A3597). There is, by the way, an unidentified congaist on *Heartbreaker*,

You be my baby, *Tell me* and *I'm movin' on*, the last also having a steel-guitar (!) and the Raelets, who are of course present on all versions of *What'd I say*. And there is an unidentified pre-Raelets vocal group on the *Leave my woman alone* session (as there is on the November 27, 1956 session, not represented on the LP), while Charles himself plays organ on part of the *You be my baby* session.

STILL WITH the blues, I was intrigued by Paul Oliver's reference (when reviewing the "Negro Religious Music" albums — *JM*, April 1969) to WASHINGTON PHILLIPS and his "dulceola". Various reference works have vouchsafed no information whatsoever as to what a dulceola might be, but I should have thought the very name was intended to suggest a sort of mechanized dulcimer. Anyway, Tony Russell has played me several Phillips sides, and I can make the following tentative comments:- Taking the analogy of the hurdy-gurdy, it is by no means impossible for the "performer" to make his own rolls for the machine, and then to use them to accompany his own voice; this might explain the very light and even sound, and particularly the vaguely inhuman speeding-up of each performance (I know that speeding-up happens with non-mechanical instrumentals, but not in this slow and measured way, and I find it significant that the early part of some performances seems too uncomfortably slow for the easy phrasing of the vocal line, particularly on *Denomination blues, Part 1* and *I am born to preach the gospel*). Anyway I'm sure at least three people would be relieved to know how a dulceola actually works, if anyone can provide the information.

MOVING on to instrumental jazz, albeit of a kind I don't care for, I'd like to take up an item on DAVE BRUBECK in the October 1966 "Collectors' Notes", which referred to "Brubeck's Greatest Hits" (Col. CL2484, CBS(E) BPG62719). Not only does the sleeve state categorically that "*I'm in a dancing mood* was recorded twice by the Quartet", but this version is audibly different from that of July 6, 1956: it seems to be Joe Morello on drums, and the recording itself has a much more modern sound, so perhaps it was done specially for this stereo album (there is nothing about this track in Jepsen). I would also point out that, if the date of *The Duke* is in fact August 22, 1961, then this also is an otherwise unissued version; however, I believe that Jepsen (Vol.2, p.140) and the sleeve are right in saying this comes from a Newport Festival LP and was recorded July 28, 1958. But the version of *In your own sweet way* is definitely the April 18, 1956 solo performance (this time Jepsen is wrong, although the August 22, 1961 — with strings arranged and conducted by Howard Brubeck, by the way — is on the "Giants Of Jazz" anthology, Col. CL1970, CBS(E) BPG62141). Another thing I listened to solely for discographical reasons is the SONNY STITT album on Argo/Cadet LP629, Marble Arch(E) MAL753, mentioned as a possible candidate for Mark Gardner's

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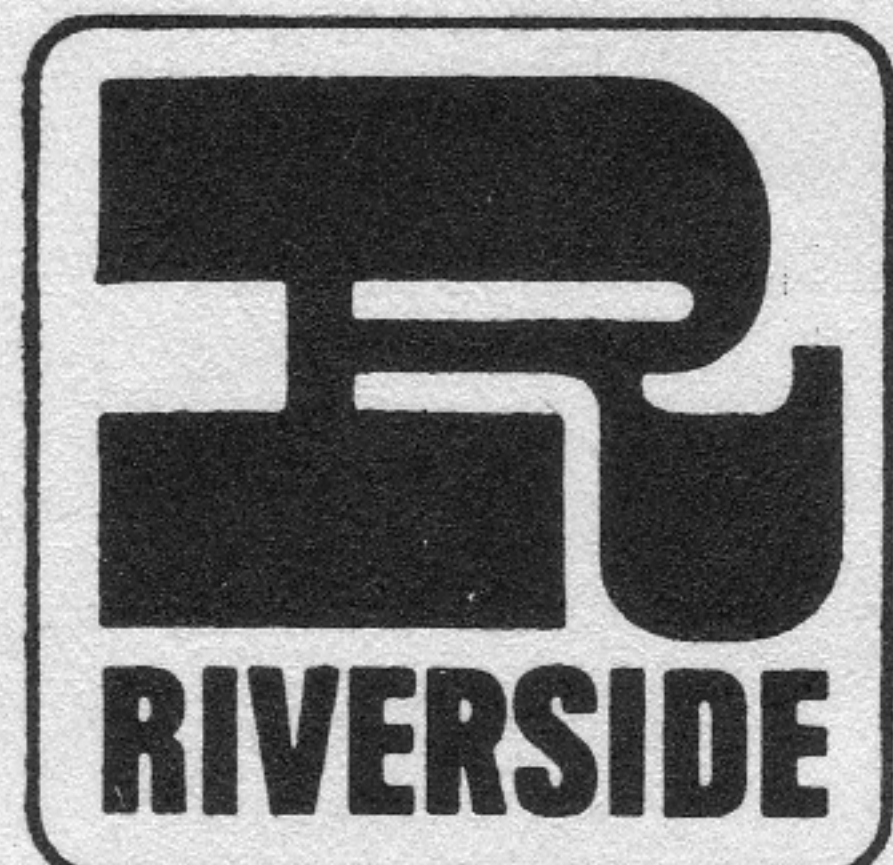
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Barry Harris listing (*JM*, September 1967 — see Jepsen, Vol.7, p.285). To anyone familiar with Harris's work, it is quite obvious that he is *not* involved; I've no idea who the pianist is, but he's the least competent member of a decidedly dodgy rhythm section — perhaps it's Tony Lee!

A few simple "clerical" errors in Jepsen. The pianist on *ART BLAKEY's* "Big Beat" LP, Blue Note BLP4029 (Vol. 1, p.386) is Bobby Timmons and not Walter Davis and the July 1959 session (p.385) was done for Fontana in New York, with Duke Jordan replacing Timmons on *Prelude in blue*; there is no drummer on *LUCKY THOMPSON's* January 27, 1956 session (Vol.8, p.39) which features a trio of Thompson, Best and Pettiford; the bassist on *THELONIOUS MONK's* December 17, 1956 (Vol.5, p.232) is not Pettiford but Paul Chambers, and there are no drums on *Monk's Mood* from the April 16, 1957 session (same page), as given correctly in Malcolm Walker's Coltrane discography (*JM*, August 1966). However, there appears to be something slightly wrong with Malcolm's listing of the *JOHNNY HODGES* August 5, 1954 session with Coltrane (of course, Jepsen doesn't reach Hodges until his next volume, and probably knows about this already). Firstly, on the evidence of the LP "Used To Be Duke", Verve MGV8150, Coltrane is not present on *Sweet as bear meat* (mat. 1862), which has a three-piece front-line. More bewilderingly, the version of *All of me* on MGV8150 is clearly from a different session, with Jimmy Hamilton and Harry Carney in place of the tenor; and this applies also to the title-track, which means that either mat.1863 and/or the track appearing on MGV 8150 have been wrongly named.

There is a small titling mix-up in Jepsen's *DUKE ELLINGTON* section, for the undated *Fade up* (Vol.3, p.460) is in fact an incomplete *Tootie for Cootie*, and therefore presumably recorded March 1, 1965. I might also mention that the January 23, 1943 performance of *Black, brown and beige* issued on FDC1004 (p.396) consists not of excerpts but of the entire work, and the LP Stardust SD124 also contains *Mood indigo* from this concert. Concerning the Cornell University concert of November 17, 1948 (p.424), Eddie Lambert and other authorities (and even myself) are convinced that Ben Webster played not just on one number but as a regular member of the sax section at this period; his predecessor Hal Singer said, about the earlier part of 1948; "I was a sixth saxophonist. Jimmy Hamilton didn't want to play sax at that time so I played his sax parts and he doubled them on clarinet (*Crescendo*, July 1966). Incidentally, the inclusion of air-shot details in Jepsen helps to clear up a biographical problem: I am not the first person to question the reference book data that Tricky Sam Nanton died July 21, 1948 and, as proof that it should be 1946 instead, it seems unlikely that Duke would have broadcast a *Tribute to Tricky Sam* (July 27, 1946 — see p.416) a whole two years before his death.

One final discographical point about Ellington: - The details printed in the two "Ellington Era" sets, blithely transcribed in all the reviews, state that Fred Guy started playing guitar in 1932 but, if you listen to the records or check the discographies, you'll find he continued to use the banjo until 1933.

NOW A FEW snippets of previously unpublished information: In a BBC *Hear Me Talkin' piece*, *ARCHIE SHEPP* mentioned that the first item recorded at his quartet session with Bill Dixon (Vol. 7, p.116) was a rejected version of *Avalon*; two shortened tracks from the *RICHARD "GROOVES" HOLMES* LP "Soul Message" (Prestige PR7435), namely *Misty* and *Groove's groove*, have found their way on to CBS(E) 202240 (a single, which gives label credits to Prestige); despite a certain mystery surrounding *WILD BILL DAVISON's* Manchester recording (Vol.3, p.195), the recording date is reliably stated to be February 14, 1965 (come back in 20 years and I'll tell you the full story!)

And a couple of theories. If the recording dates are correct for *PAUL CHAMBERS's* album "Go", VJ LP1014 (Vol.2, p.287) — and if there's nothing sinister in the presence of a studio audience on February 2, 1959 who were absent on February 3 — then the sessions must have been done in Chicago. The reason is that the majority of the personnel also did an LP under Cannoball Adderley's name on February 3 (vol.1, p.13), the sleeve of which states

that they were appearing in Chicago at the time with Miles Davis. Also concerned with dates and locations is my theory about six tracks on *SPIRITUALS TO SWING*, Vol.1: it strikes me that the reason nobody knows which concert they were recorded at is that they weren't recorded in concert at all. The acoustic is that of a very small studio or private rooms (they must have been remade for the private satisfaction of John Hammond, due to faulty balance at the actual concert) and the six tracks are *Blues with Helen*, *Mortgage stomp*, *Don't be that way*, *I ain't got nobody* and, possibly, the two James P. items.

Talking of JAMES P. JOHNSON, I recently made a discovery, only to discover it had previously been made by Miles Kington; However, I now see that the original discoverer (sorry, Miles) was Dick Wellstood, writing in *The Jazz Review* for December 1958 about "W.C. Handy Blues" by James P. and Katharine Handy Lewis (Folkways FG3540). I quote:- "The second and third tracks . . . *Blue Moods 2* and *Blue moods sex(!)* . . . are absolutely identical, except that track 3 ends with an 8-bar coda which is absent from track 2 . . . Since track 3 is louder and clearer than track 2, my guess is that track 2 is merely an incomplete copy of it". The tracks in question appeared on XTRA (E) XTRA1024 as *Theme* and *Blue moods*, and in that order — i.e. the latter is the more complete performance.

Another solo piano recording of similar vintage and even more obscure origin is the LP "Art!" (Fontana FJL904). Ray Spencer in the June 1967 *Jazz Journal* claimed that only four of the ten tracks were in fact by ART TATUM and since the question is far from clear, I've listened to the record as carefully and as open-mindedly as possible; I find my reactions have not varied much, and the consensus of my opinion is that, while I see what he means, Spencer is probably wrong. Certainly the four tracks he accepted as authentic are the same ones I find unmistakable (*Gang o'notes*, *Crystal clear*, *Apollo boogie* and *Between midnight and dawn*) but unfortunately he undermined his argument by stating that these have "a different recording from the other six". It's difficult to generalize about the reproduction because there are often differences of quality within the course of a track; nevertheless, if one divides the tracks on this basis, there are two other numbers which share the same characteristics as the abovementioned, and these happen to be musically the two next strongest candidates on my list, *Too sharp for this flat* and *Playing in riddles*. These are both based on standards (the first of which I can't put a name to, though the second is *You took advantage of me*) and both have the same casual and (deliberately?) simplified approach as *Crystal clear*, which is *Sweet Lorraine* with a different middle — in fact, with two different middles, because the pianist apparently forgets his chords, just as he forgets the vestigial opening theme of *Too sharp* by the end. It seems to me that this is Tatum actually improvising (which he was most reluctant to do for the general public) and perhaps under some constraint to "play simple" so that the publisher's transcriptions would sell to more people.

This leaves four 12-bar blues items (really three, for *This and that* is virtually an alternate take to *52nd St. blues*), which are very untypical of Tatum's known blues recordings, but what Spencer calls the pianist's "Heavier touch" is actually a result of the variable reproduction (note the effect of the sudden loss of volume near the end of *52nd St.*). What we have here is a decidedly odd combination of attempts at a solid piano blues style and stifled excursions into sophisticated improvisation, with very little continuity — I can only think of one pianist capable of this extraordinary mixture, and I can only imagine that someone told Tatum to "play funky" (or whatever the 1946 equivalent was). Even here, there are "a few Tatum tricks and mannerisms" (Spencer), which leads me to think it's Tatum himself, for anyone else borrowing these mannerisms (e.g. Jimmy Jones or early Hank Jones) would have gone the whole hog and done a more obvious pastiche. Surely there must be somebody who knows the answer, though probably not anybody concerned with the recent LP issue; Spencer's surprise that "Charles Fox had no doubts" shows a certain naivety in view of the speed with which sleeve-notes usually have to be written (similarly with the James P., for which he also did the note), but one may raise an eyebrow at Max Harrison, who reviewed both records in *JM*

(March 1966 and June 1967) and made none of the above comments.

BY THE WAY, I was rather upset that, in his "New Thing Notes" (*JM*, January 1969), Max Harrison lifted my Berk joke (cf. Ted Curson review, *JM*, May 1966) and hammered it into the ground so unmercifully. Of course, this kind of coincidence happens quite frequently, if you look for it — I know that I've quoted other writers, sometimes intentionally but often unconsciously — and I see that Mark Gardner (*Jazz Journal*, April 1969) has used the same metaphor about Harold Land that I used about Frank Foster last November. And I wonder if, when Max Harrison called Gillespie's 1953 band a "shucking and jiving group" (*JM*, April 1965), he was aware that Bill Crow in *The Jazz Review* for February 1960 called Gillespie's 1953 band a "shucking and jiving group"! We can learn a lot from this about the problem of musical quotations and influence and memory, but meanwhile what do you make of the fact that Hasaan Ibn Ali's *Almost like me* (recorded with Max Roach) uses the same bass figure which runs through Sun Ra's *Brainville*? And that this also occurs in simplified form in the opening bars of Cecil Taylor's *Pots* and of Herbie Nichols's *Shuffle Montgomery*? Is it too far-fetched to suggest that they all remembered Ellington's introduction to the 1939 Hodges recording of *Wanderlust*? (And did you know that the opening phrase of Sun Ra's *Fall off the log* is also the opening phrase of Norman Simmons's *Holla* on the Johnny Griffin "Big Soul Band" album? At least they do both come from Chicago . . .)

However, just before we forget Herbie Nichols again, I should mention that Max Harrison's abovementioned article was perhaps slightly unfair about the chapter on Nichols in A.B. Spellman's book *Four Lives In The Bebop Business*. Firstly, I believe the session with Joe Thomas for Atlantic, which Albert McCarthy supervised, is mentioned but that Spellman unluckily assumed that "Anderson Chambers" and Co. were on it (and surely, at least in Nichols's mouth, the words "I've never been written up" refer to interviews, the only sort of jazz journalism that counts in the good old U.S.A.). Secondly, this chapter does contain some sketchy but previously unpublished discographical information, such as the fact that Nichols's first recording under his name (the Hi-Lo date) was "with a quartet that included drummer Shadow Wilson"; obviously, Nichols felt that the interview by Spellman was his last chance to get down any reasonably complete account of his recording career (one of the small goofs in *Jazz On Record* which reviewers have overlooked is that the date of his death, 1963 has been omitted). Some of the information which Spellman has passed on is little more than a guide to further research, as in the case of "his first date . . . with Danny Barker for Apollo records" in 1945-6, and the 1950 sessions with trumpeter Bobby Mitchell for Mercury and Frank Humphreys for Abbey, none of which I have seen listed — although, according to Albert McCarthy, Danny Barker has stated that Herbie Nichols replaced Norman Lester on one of the two Blue Lu Barker Apollo dates in Jepsen (Vol.1, p.226). An interesting point arises from the assertion that Mary Lou Williams recorded three Herbie Nichols tunes (I am not familiar with her Atlantic versions of *Mary's waltz* and *Opus 2* — not *Opus Z*, as in Jepsen — or the Circle recording of *At da function*, but Mary's waltz was remade for French Vogue and credited, I think, to "Williams"); however, I have noticed that on the RCA "Jazz Piano" LP Mary Lou plays something called *45 degree angle*, which happens to be a title on Nichols's extremely rare Bethlehem album. Does any reader know anybody anywhere who possesses this?

And then there is the reference to "some straight rhythm-and-blues recordings with saxophonists Charlie Singleton . . . for Decca" in 1950. Jepsen (Vol.7, p.167) lists a December 6, 1950 session with the following personnel:- Ray Copeland (tpt); unknown tbn; Charlie Singleton (alt); Lucky Thompson (ten); Eddie Barefield (bar); unknown p; Peck Morrison (bs); Sticks Evans (d); Freddie Jackson (vcl). So there it is — but why, for God's sake? Wasn't he paid up with the Union? Did somebody want him not to be paid for this session? "Unknown" . . . in one word, the story of Herbie Nichols.

JOHN SURMAN AT L.S.E. / ROGER COTTERRELL

JOHN SURMAN OCTET: Harold Beckett (tpt, fl-hn); Malcolm Griffiths (tbn); Mike Osborne (alt); Alan Skidmore (ten); John Surman (bar, sop); John Taylor (p); Harry Miller (bs) Alan Jackson (d) – at the London School of Economics Jazz Club, May 22nd.

LSE JAZZ CLUB, temporarily oblivious to the mood of intense doom which pervades the London School of Economics these days, put on a swinging and much appreciated concert in May.

They could hardly have chosen a better group to counteract the current gloom, since the free-wheeling spirit of John Surman's Octet hasn't yet suffered from the inevitable 'hustle' of the jazz scene. The group's enthusiasm is audible and visible. As well as that, Surman knows one or two (non-musical) tricks of the trade – such as the importance of communicating with the audience on a personal level as well as on a musical level. On this occasion he announced nearly every piece the band played. Some of his announcements were inaudible but at least he was *trying* and the audience appreciated it. All this, together with the very substantial musical virtues of the group, made for its ready acceptance by a student audience.

Surman himself is undoubtedly the strongest musical voice in the band. In the ensemble his huge rumbling sound gives a rich Ellingtonish flavour to the saxophone section. His solos have an unrelenting momentum and sheer violence that makes one wonder why no-one has ever played the baritone like this before. In some ways it is hard to take a reasonably objective view of Surman. No-one has played the baritone in anything approaching his style previously; no-one has ever got those incredible harmonics out of the instrument before, and because of this, an aura of sensationalism surrounds Surman in much the same way as it surrounds Roland Kirk. It may take us as long to weigh up Surman's real contribution as it has taken us to weigh up Kirk's.

In terms of impact altoist Osborne comes a close second to Surman. He has a fleet, skittering style which gives his solos the feeling of switchback rides through the chords. I can't think of any other altoist who has a comparable style. There are hints of Lee Konitz in the occasional angularity of Osborne's lines, but his tone is a more typical alto sound. The main debt seems to be to Coltrane in the meticulous, swooping, chord and scale runs which permeate Osborne's solos. At the moment, for all his facility and originality

of style, Osborne's musical vocabulary sounds a little limited, but he has the capacity to be an extremely good soloist.

The rest of the group ranges from highly professional to very good indeed. There is not a single weak link among these eight and each one of them is capable of original and inspired playing. I know of very few groups anywhere, let alone English groups, which could have the same thing said about them. Skidmore is a consistently exciting soloist, with less of a Coltrane sound than one might expect. If his ideas occasionally remind one of another saxophonist – it seems, surprisingly enough, to be Osborne. Griffiths I found a little too brash and unsubtle on this occasion, though I confess to not having heard much of his playing elsewhere, Taylor, who was difficult to hear except in his solos, played a very fine, harmonically rich passage on his feature, *Albatross*. Miller and Jackson make up a strong rhythm section and Jackson puts plenty of muscle and drive into the rock rhythms which Surman seems to like.

Because of the generous length of solos and their frequent high quality and adventurousness, the band at the moment gives the impression of being more of a showpiece for the musicians than a group enterprise. In spite of this the arrangements are far from weak. *My Ship*, scored to feature Beckett's clear toned fluegelhorn, used a lot of interesting devices including a low saxophone pedal point as a background to most of Beckett's first chorus. The faster pieces conjure up a Jazz Messengers' feeling. Surman's *Stand by*, for example, sounded something of a second cousin to the Jazz Messengers' *Time Off* and built up to a good deal of excitement. Some of the other tunes in the repertoire, such as *Spiro*, are obviously 'pop' influenced and use Jackson's muscular but flexible rock rhythms.

The use of these rhythms in Surman's band is an experiment which is certainly having interesting results. It shows that uncompromising and adventurous solos can be played effectively over this rhythmic base just as any other, without sounding incongruous. Whether this new "Third Stream", as Brian Priestley has lately been calling it, is likely to be of long term value to jazz is another matter. The first few numbers of this type which Surman's group played at L.S.E. sounded very fresh and interesting. Later one had the feeling that it could be too much of a good thing. Jackson is a fine drummer and his flexible accents within the idiom never became boring. But for all his efforts the limitations of Rock-Jazz are going to be much like the limitations of Afro-Jazz or Machito-Jazz – earthbound rhythm sections working very hard and getting nowhere. Yet within its limitations it makes for variety within the jazz idiom.

ONE OF THE highspots of the concert was undoubtedly Surman's soul-searching soprano marathon on *Albatross* played with just the rhythm section. On this as on all his solos, Surman gave so much of himself that comparison with Coltrane's approach was irrelevant. His baritone solos throughout the evening, often starting Mulliganish and later developing into passages of screaming harmonics and huge bullying runs in the low register, can only be described as "elephantine tear-ups". Small wonder Surman had a vast yellow towel on hand. Bathed in sweat, at the end of the evening he quietly thanked everyone for coming and hoped they had enjoyed the concert. Without doubt, Surman made quite an impression on the audience. In a very short time he seems to have already made some significant contribution to British jazz and may be destined for greater triumphs yet.

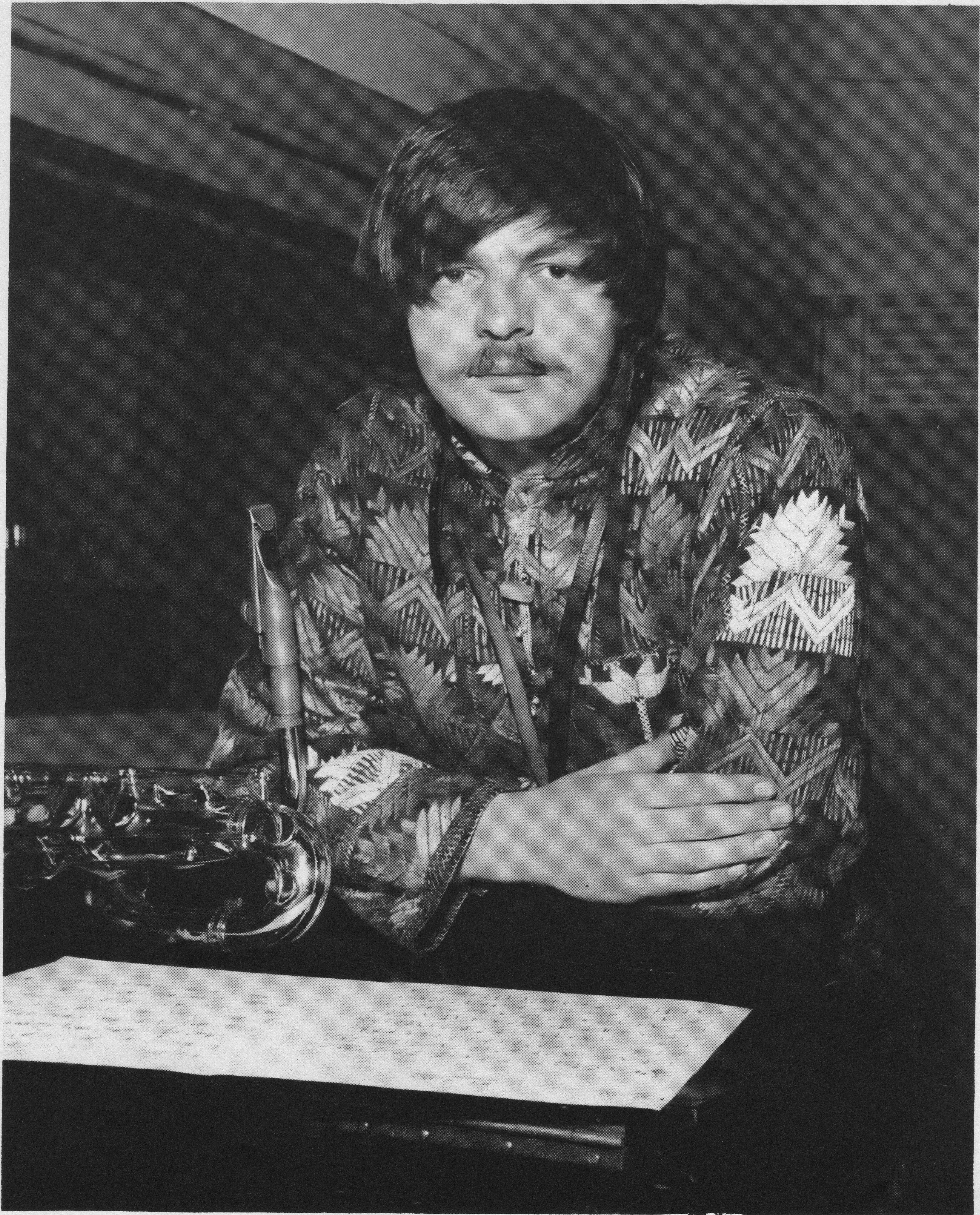
ROGER COTTERRELL

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FRED ASTAIRE

Fred Astaire (vcl, tap-dancing-1); Charlie Shavers (tpt-2); Flip Phillips (ten-3); Oscar Peterson (p, cls-4); Barney Kessel (g); Ray Brown (bs); Alvin Stoller (d)

Los Angeles - December 1952

Top hat, white tie and tails-1,2 :: You're easy to dance with-3 :: The way you look tonight :: Let's call the whole thing off-2 :: Cheek to cheek :: No strings-4 :: Slow dance (no vcl)-1 :: I won't dance :: I used to be colour blind :: They all laughed-3 :: New sun in the sky :: I concentrate on you-2 :: Fast dance (no vcl)-1 :: A foggy day-3 :: A fine romance :: Night and day-2 :: I'm building up to an awful let down-2, 3 :: So near and yet so far-5 :: 'S Wonderful :: They can't take that away from me-5 :: Steppin' out with my baby-2 :: Change partners-5 :: Isn't this a lovely day

-5 Kessel not present on this track

Fred Astaire (vcl) acc unidentified tpt; tbn; Saxes; p; g; bs; d

Los Angeles - 1958

Just like taking candy from a baby :: There's no time like the present :: That face :: Hello baby :: Sweet sorrow

Verve ® VSP-23/24 (37/5d.)

THIS IS a penance set I suppose for all those blues goodies reviewed in the past; I feel now that the score is settled; Twenty-eight tracks of tedium make this an effective night-cap but doubtless will bring some kind of pleasure to the grey-haired fans who can visualise in misty nostalgia the bright, suave if homely Fred Astaire of *Top Hat* days, and wish to recall the images to mind. Recalled with sadness I expect, as the notes are missed and the tinsel gaiety of the shallow 'thirties refuses to be summoned by the waving of a silver-topped cane. I have a regard for old troupers, but this doesn't extend to such uncomfortable lengths, and so am not the ideal choice for a review of "Personality" as the record-trading outlets call it. Astaire, who taps noisily on a few tracks, emphasising that this kind of dance is audio-visual and ineffective as noise alone, is accompanied on many items by a small jazz group. Oscar Peterson seems entirely at home and on a few tracks Barney Kessel emerges to play some good guitar solos, as on *'S Wonderful* and *A Fine Romance*. For me, Flip Phillips is quite superfluous and the best moments come from Charlie Shavers's muted trumpet work. On other tracks a big band, Basie-style, gives a more forceful accompaniment that wakens Astaire from the general lethargy, but is otherwise undistinguished. "There were numerous occasions when individual musicians created spontaneous and entirely apt phrases or introductions" writes Alun Morgan in a guardedly honest sleeve-note. They are too widely separated to justify the time spent waiting.

PAUL OLIVER

BIG BILL BROONZY

THE YOUNG BIG BILL BROONZY 1928-1935:

Big Bill Broonzy (vcl, g); John Thomas (vcl)

Chicago c. October 1928

20923-2 *Starvation Blues*

SAMMY SAMPSON (Big Bill Broonzy) (vcl-g); Frank Brasswell (g)
New York City - April 9, 1930

19599-2 *I Can't Be Satisfied*

9601-2 *Skoodle Do Do*

RECORD REVIEWS

- FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS:** Georgia Tom (vcl, p) added
New York City — April 9, 1930
- 9595-1 *Eagle Ridin' Papa*
BIG BILL JOHNSON (Big Bill Broonzy) (vcl, g); Frank Brasswell (g)
Richmond, Ind. — May, 2, 1930
- 16578 *Saturday Night Rub*
Brasswell out
Richmond, Ind. — November 19, 1930
- 17281 *The Banker's Blues*
HOKUM BOYS AND JANE LUCAS: Jane Lucas (vcl, tamb-1); Big Bill Broonzy (g); Georgia Tom (vcl, p)
Richmond, Ind. — November 20, 1930
- 17287-B *Hip Shakin' Strut-1*
17288-A *Hokum Strut*
JOHNSON AND SMITH: Big Bill Broonzy (vcl, g); Steele Smith (vcl, g)
Richmond, Ind. — February 9, 1932
- 18386-A *Brown Skin Shuffle*
18387-A *Stove Pipe Stomp*
BIG BILL: Big Bill Broonzy (vcl, g)
New York City — March 29, 1932
- 11611-2 *How You Want it Done?*
Long Tall Mama
BIG BILL BROONZY (vcl, g) acc unknown (p)
Chicago — March 23, 1934
- 80395-1 *Mississippi River Blues*
Bill Settles (bs) added
Chicago — October 31, 1935
- 96232-1 *Good Liquor Gonna Carry Me Down*

Yazoo ® L-1011

IT COULD be argued that Broonzy wasn't a Mississippi singer. Though he was born in

Mississippi the fact that he learned to play guitar in Chicago, by his own admission, requires that he be considered as a totally urban artist. There's some truth in this I think, though his many rag themes are by no means representative of the city and have a great deal of the country dance in them. He was a fiddle player before he was a guitarist and he may have transposed traditional themes to the new instrument. The emphasis in this collection is on his rag, dance and stomp tunes, the compilers taking to task his "earliest white admirers" who "Interpreted him as a social phenomenon rather than as a musical or historical one." They refer to the "slower, more sedate style" of his later years as he became more "folklore orientated", but those among his earliest white admirers will doubtless be impressed with the essential *similarity* of his early work with that of his last years. Broonzy in the 'fifties played a great many dance pieces and recorded a number for such labels as Vogue, Nixa and Mercury. In these he frequently used the kind of phrasing and melodic runs, the rapid picking and dynamic swing of *Brown Skin Shuffle* or *Skoodle Do Do*. Quite the most striking evaluation of this excellent collection is in the consistency of Broonzy's music, and though his work has suffered many fluctuations of taste in recent years this selection should do much to inspire a new evaluation of his work.

A couple of titles have already been issued here — *Mississippi River Blues* and *Hip Shakin' Strut* but this must not deter intend-

ing purchasers, for such titles as the moving *Starvation Blues*, the very accomplished *Saturday Night Rub* and the fine flat-picked *How You Want it Done?* which employs patterns which much later, reappeared in his *John Henry*, should not be missed. I think this record must dismiss some of the, regrettably, fixed opinions concerning Broonzy which have been shared by many blues enthusiasts since his death. It supports a contention that the tunes and themes of his childhood persisted into adult life, and that his lifelong association with his smallholding in Arkansas kept alive his links with Southern music even though he was based for most of his mature years in Chicago. The sleeve notes give a great deal of attention to the musical structure of his tunes and the part played by his accompanists. One can hope for a later issue of his blues recordings for, as the notes quaintly put it, "such an oversight is inexorable." Yazoo LPs are available from specialist dealers at present but will soon be pressed in this country.

PAUL OLIVER

BO CARTER

- BO CARTER — GREATEST HITS 1930-1940:**
MISSISSIPPI SHEIKS Bo Carter (vcl, poss. vln); Sam Chatman (g)
San Antonio — June 11, 1930
- 404149-A *Bootlegger's Blues*
BO CARTER (vcl, g)
Atlanta — October 25, 1931
- 405025 *I Want You To Know*
MISSISSIPPI SHEIKS Bo Carter (vcl, vln); Walter Vincson (vcl, g)
Grafton, Wis. — July 1932
- L-1551-3 *The New Stop and Listen Blues*
BO CARTER (vcl, g)
San Antonio — March 26, 1934
- 82612-1 *Beans*
82616-1 *Tellin' You 'Bout It*
MISSISSIPPI SHEIKS Bo Carter (vcl, vln); Walter Vincson (vcl, g); Sam Chatman (g)
San Antonio — March 27, 1934
- 82635-1 *Sales Tax*
BO CARTER (vcl, g)
New Orleans — February 20, 1936
- 99242-1 *Dinner Blues*
New Orleans — October 15, 1936
- 02614-1 *The Ins and outs of my Girl*
02616-1 *Bo Carter's Advice*
02619-1 *Your biscuits are Big Enough For Me*
San Antonio — October 22, 1938
- 027873-1 *Who's Been Here?*
027876-1 *Let's Get Drunk Again*
027879-1 *Country Fool*
Atlanta — February 12, 1940
- 047647-1 *Arrangement for Me — Blues*

Yazoo ® L-1014

BO CARTER has been dead for a couple of years, if recent reports are correct, and he did not live to see any recognition for his early work appear in reissue. When Ian Ross, who issued an ill-fated tape of Bo Carter, reviewed

in *JM* a couple of years ago, attempted to trace Carter to pay him some royalties, he was unable to make any contact with him. When I saw him in 1960 and gave him a "perfunctory interview" as the Yazoo notes say (surely, he gave *me* the interview?), he was already exceedingly ill and blind, So it is with sadness that one hears this collection of titles made when Bo Carter was in his prime. Yazoo are to be congratulated for bringing to the notice of collectors many of the less-appreciated singers and traditions of the blues. Why Carter has been so overlooked is difficult to ascertain, but the neglect of his work results probably from the use of a violin. On some records, a lightness of touch rather than a heavy and intense approach to his music, and a certain prudishness about the more outrageous of his songs which was much in evidence in writings a few years ago. On the Mississippi Sheiks titles Carter played violin and Walter Vincson (reported alive, now) played guitar, though they were versatile enough to swap instruments. The overall sound is slightly nostalgic, even wistful, with country dance elements in the music of the Sheiks. Personally, I find Bo Carter a very moving singer even though his material was often light; perhaps it is the understatement of emotion that particularly appeals. At any rate, there are few real *blues* here; mostly they are songs, of which some have an unusual structure, or have equally unusual themes — *Dinner Blues* for instance. Others are just humorous, like *Sales Tax*, still others sadly regretful blues-songs, like *I Want You To Know*. Carter is often noted as a bawdy singer and *Your Biscuits, Who's Been Here* and *Ins and Outs* have this character. But I find them quite inoffensive, indeed, wholly charming. Charming? Is this an adjective to apply to a blues singer? Well, why not — these songs are engaging and beautifully played, with Carter's clear tones and lightly swinging, faultless finger-picking continuing to delight. The notes make some interesting points about the music even if they somewhat pedantically emphasise the keys in which the items are played. As usual with Yazoo the production is superior, and there is a very nice picture of Bo Carter taken about 1936 and supplied by Frederick Ramsey Jr. on the cover. Another score for Yazoo to chalk up!

PAUL OLIVER

RAY CHARLES

RAY CHARLES AT NEWPORT:

Lee Harper, Marcus Belgrave (tp); David Newman (ten); Bennie Crawford Jr. (bar); Ray Charles (p, alt, vcl-1); Edgar Wills (bs); Richard Goldberg (d)

Newport, R.I. — July 5, 1958

In a little Spanish town :: *I got a sweetie (I got a woman)-1* :: *Blues waltz* :: *Hot rod* :: *Sherry* :: *A fool for you -1* as above, plus The Raylettes (vcl)

Same date

The right time-1 :: *Talkin' 'bout you-1*

Atlantic 588 132 (37/6d.)

AS ONE OF the few *J.M.* reviewers who did not react violently against the Ray Charles craze of some years ago. I can give a dispassionate welcome to this LP as a reminder of battles joined and unfought. Charles may be something of a theatrical *poseur* when compared to a classic blues shouter; on the other hand, he did come to terms with his audience in a way that men with more natural ability did not. Here I am thinking of Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker, Howlin' Wolf and others, much of whose work since the mid-'fifties strikes me as irrelevant compared to Charles's gospel travesties. Charles possessed a distinctive voice, a good range (his screams are controlled ones), an elastic sense of time and enough musicianly acumen to acquire at least passable accompanists and to rise well above the limits of style which had by now engulfed the average urban blues singer. On paper *I've got a woman* or *A fool for you* appear sentimental and trite beside even a second-rate blues. Given Charles's direct and quite unsentimental delivery, however, garnished by his melodramatic leaps and slurs, these songs cut straight through to his audience.

The four vocals on this LP benefit from the live atmosphere and make it a good buy for the faithful, though I doubt if it will convert anyone. The instrumental tracks sound undistinguished, then

as now, and Marjorie Hendricks's singing on *The right time* sounds frightful.

RONALD ATKINS

CHICAGO SOUTH SIDE, VOLUME 2

JIMMY NOONE'S ORCHESTRA:

Jimmy Noone (clt); Joe Poston (alt); Zinky Cohn (p); Wilber Gorham (g); Johnny Wells (d); Helen Savage (vcl-1)

Chicago — October 12, 1929

C-4687 *Melancholy baby*

C-4688 *After you've gone-1*

Jimmy Noone (clt); Eddie Pollack (alt); Earl Hines (p); John Henley (g); Quinn Wilson (bs); Benny Washington (d); Art Jarrett (vcl)

Chicago — July 27, 1931

C-7914 *It's you*

TINY PARHAM AND HIS MUSICIANS

Ernest 'Kid Punch' Miller (cnt); Ike Covington (tbn); unknown alt; ten; vln; Tiny Parham (p); Mike McKendrick (bj); Quinn Wilson (brass bs); Ernie Marrero (d)

Chicago — October 25, 1929

57334 *Bombay*

57336 *Golden Lily*

DIXIE RHYTHM KINGS:

Shirley Clay, George Mitchell (cnt); Omer Simeon (clt, alt); Cecil Irwin (ten, clt); Earl Hines (p); Claude Roberts (bj); Hayes Alvis (brass bs); Wallace Bishop (d)

Chicago — September 23, 1929

C-4391 *Story book ball*

C-4392 *Easy rider*

CHICAGO FOOTWARMERS:

Natty Dominique (cnt); Johnny Dodds (clt); Jimmy Blythe (p); Warren 'Baby' Dodds (wbd)

Chicago — December 3, 1927

82000 *Ballin' the jack*

82001 *Grandma's ball*

HIGHTOWER'S NIGHTHAWKS:

Willie Hightower (cnt); John Lindsay (tbn); Fred Parham (clt, sop); Richard M. Jones (p); Bud Scott (g); Rudy Richardson (d)

Chicago — July 20, 1927

Boar hog blues

STATE STREET RAMBLERS:

Natty Dominique (cnt); unknown (alt); Jimmy Blythe (p); W.E. Burton (wbd)

Richmond, Indiana — April 23, 1928

13689-A *Shanghai honeymoon*

13691-A *Tack it down*

JIMMY BLYTHE'S WASHBOARD WIZARDS:

Johnny Dodds (clt); Jimmy Blythe (p); W.E. Burton (wbd)

Chicago — March 30, 1928

E7256-A *My baby-1*

E7257-W *Oriental man-2*

-1 group vocal on this track; -2 vocal duet on this track

Historical HLP-30 (55/-)

MY MELANCHOLY has the gentle, wistful quality that was so characteristic of Noone, his closing solo displaying his beautiful tone. Both *After* and *It's* suffer from indifferent vocals, but while Noone and Poston redeem the former by their individual contributions not even a brilliant short solo by Hines and an effective one by Noone can rescue *It's* from the combined onslaught of Messrs. Pollack and Jarrett. The Parham tracks are pleasant though inconsequential, with reasonable solos from Miller — I consider this identification questionable — and both sax men, the altoist sounding not unlike Poston. *Story* has an excellent Hines solo, but Simeon is not featured prominently, confining himself to a clarinet duet with Irwin and alto in ensemble passages. *Easy* is superior, with an attractive Simeon clarinet solo mostly in the low register, a rhythmically complex Hines solo, and good lead work from the cornets. Hightower, something of a legendary figure, plays well on *Boar*, using the lagging phrasing that one associates with Lee Collins at this period. Scott has a reasonable solo but Parham and Lindsay are quite pedestrian. The remaining tracks on side two are representative Blythe small group recordings. The music is light-hearted and functional, with Dodds, as was frequently the case,

playing extremely well in the company of his musical inferiors. The Dodds solos on *Ballin'*, *Granma's*, *My baby* and *Oriental* are all first rate and make good use of contrasting registers; one has only to compare these performances with the two on which he is absent to realise how important his presence was in raising the level of the music.

Blythe is agreeable enough in this context and Dominique his usual enthusiastic uncertain self.

The sound is reasonable, except on the Hightower track, playing time 45 minutes. Providing there are no duplication problems, collectors will find this a reasonable anthology of its kind.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

KENNY CLARKE-FRANCY BOLAND BIG BAND

ALL SMILES:

Benny Bailey (tpt, fl-h); Idrees Sulieman, Jimmy Deuchar, Sonny Grey (tpt); Ake Persson, Nat Peck, Erik van Lier (tbn); Derek Humble (alt); Johnny Griffin, Ronnie Scott, Tony Coe (ten); Sahib Shihab (bar, fl); Francy Boland (p, arr); Jimmy Woode (bs); Kenny Clarke, Kenny Clare (d); Dave Pike (vib)

Cologne — May 13 and 14, 1968

Let's face the music and dance :: I'm all smiles :: You stepped out of a dream :: I'm glad there is you :: Get out of town :: By Strauss :: When your lover has gone :: Gloria :: Sweet and lovely :: High school cadets

Polydor 583 727 (37/6d.)

THE CLARKE-BOLAND 'Latin Kaleidoscope' LP (Polydor 583 726) was as unsatisfactory as

Michael James implied in his review (April J.M.) This release is proof of Michael's surmise that the material on that occasion was unsuitable.

It may be objected that Boland's arrangements are conservative, but as one who believes that the big band tradition flourished because of, not in spite of, its strong links with popular entertainment — I will expand this viewpoint at a later date — I remain unconvinced that an injection of new thing devices will do other than worsen an already unpromising situation. Boland, from the evidence of his work here, is a fine craftsman and, mercifully, eschews the Basie-at-secondhand sound that is now the norm of most arrangers. His scoring for saxes, reminiscent of Benny Carter and Eddie Wilcox, is strikingly successful on *You stepped, Get out* and *When your lover*, while the ensemble passages on most titles show a concern for varied textures and avoidance of the commonplace.

The soloists generally acquit themselves well. Coe is outstanding on the ballad *Gloria*, offering his finest recorded feature to date, and Scott (*By Strauss*) Griffin (*Sweet*), Bailey (*I'm glad*), Pike (*I'm all*), Sulieman (*When your lover*) and Persson (*Get out*) all contribute worthwhile solos. Some writers have made excessive claims for this band, but the combination of unhackneyed scores and fresh-sounding solos allied to the impression of enthusiasm conveyed by all the participants, has resulted in an LP that has merits too infrequently encountered in the run-of-the-mill big band LPs that now clutter the lists. Recording excellent, playing time 36 minutes.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

ALICE AND JOHN COLTRANE

COSMIC MUSIC:

John Coltrane (ten, bs-clt-1), Pharoah Sanders (ten, fl-2); Alice Coltrane (p); Jimmy Garrison (bs); Rashied Ali, Ray Appleton (perc)

San Francisco — February 2, 1966

Manifestation-2 :: Reverend King-1

Ben Riley replaces Ali; John Coltrane and Appleton out

New York City — January 29, 1968

Lord, help me to be :: The sun-2

Impulse SIPL (MIPL) 515 (37/5d.)

JOHN COLTRANE passed through an astonishing number of different phases in little more

than a decade, but this comes of course from his last, mystical-avant-garde period. It is the first of a series to be released from tapes recorded by Coltrane himself, filled out with new recordings by his wife (*Sun* was recorded after Coltrane's death, but never-

theless has an opening invocation from him and Pharoah Sanders).

On the two earlier recordings Coltrane's playing has as always a power and command that puts every tenor player in the free idiom completely in the shade — and Sanders, in particular, suffers from the direct comparison. On the other hand Coltrane, again as always, lacks the light and shade, the ability to phase separate stages of a solo into one another, which others as different as Shepp and Rollins so notably have. It is for this reason that many, myself included, are inclined to find Coltrane's music a bit too much of a good thing, tending to boredom or, in this final period, unrelenting hysteria. The one moment that stands out here is the superbly controlled theme statement on *King*. Coltrane also plays bass clarinet on this track, a weird amalgam of high-pitched cries that sound not at all unlike an avant-garde trumpet and occasional brief noodles in the more familiar lower register.

Alice Coltrane's piano is sorely under-recorded on the numbers with her husband, but she comes into her own on the other two tracks, where it is Sanders's turn to fade into the background so that his flute is almost totally inaudible on *Sun*. Personally I find the piano playing the most attractive feature of the record; Mrs Coltrane has a basically romantic and rhapsodic style, and although the effect is very different from that of Cecil Taylor, her rich rippling phrases still fit well into the hectic context of the music, largely because of the way she trickles over the surface of the flailing rhythms. *Sun*, in particular, is an enjoyable and highly individual piano feature.

If you happen to like the later Coltrane you'll surely want this LP; if you don't, you won't. My own feelings are mixed; there is much that I admire in an abstract sort of way, but the passages of continual frenzy are too anarchic for my tastes. Yet, except perhaps for *King*, there is certainly much more sense of direction than on a record like *Ascension* for example. Try *Manifestation* for a sample; 33 minutes.

DON LOCKE

JOHN COLTRANE

THREE LITTLE WORDS-THE ATLANTIC YEARS VOL.1:

John Coltrane (ten); Milt Jackson (vib); Hank Jones (p); Paul Chambers (bs); Connie Kay (d)

New York City — January 15, 1959

Bags and Trane :: Three little words :: The night we called it a day :: Bebop :: The late, late blues

Atlantic 588 139 (37/6d.)

BEARING in mind that the standard of the two main protagonists' work never falls below that of

supreme competence, this reissue may fairly be described as a routine session. No heights of artistry are scaled during these 37 minutes but devotees of Jackson or Coltrane will find much to reward their attention, particularly in the two twelve-bars, *The late, late blues* and *Bags and Trane*. The common ground afforded by the traditional sequence enables them to express themselves in a more compatible way than is the case with the other items, where Jackson's sprightly resilience jars with the sour aggressiveness evoked by his partner's work.

If there seems often throughout this album to be a hiatus between these two men in emotional terms, the rhythm section chosen to accompany them suffers from faults that are far more serious. For a start, Paul Chambers is far too strong a bassist to work smoothly with the discreet Hank Jones, and the internal balance of the supporting trio is further disrupted by the inclusion of Kay, whose trudgingly laborious cymbal beat would be no asset in the best of circumstances. These shortcomings, as one might expect, are less obvious at ballad pace, as in *Night*, than in the faster pieces, *Words* and *Bebop*, which must be accounted the weakest items of the set. Without achieving any memorable moments Jackson drives along well, and Coltrane, though functioning at a rigid dynamic level, also maintains a heated barrage of sound, but deprived of the support they so clearly demand their efforts prove in the upshot as abortive as they are energetic. MICHAEL JAMES

MIKE COOPER/IAN ANDERSON

THE INVERTED WORLD:

MIKE COOPER (vcl, g)

Bristol — c. early 1968

One time blues :: Few short lines :: Send me to the 'lectric chair :: The way I feel :: Good book teach you :: Bulldog blues

Ian Anderson (g); Chris Turner (hca) added; no vcl
prob. same or similar date

The inverted world

IAN ANDERSON (vcl, g); Elliot Jackson (hca-1)

prob. same or similar date

Cottonfield blues-1 :: West country blues :: Don't you want to go? :: Big road blues-1 :: Little queen of spades :: Tom Rushen blues-1

Al Jones (vcl, g); Noel Sheldon (jug) added; one artist also plays kazoo

prob. same or similar date

Beedle um bum-1

Saydisc ® SDM 159 (41/-)

MIKE COOPER gave me the approximate recording date I've quoted, but Ian Anderson, in

BU 62, says that the LP was recorded "between one and three years ago". I only mention this because Anderson also claims "we . . . have obviously progressed a bit since then". Well, this isn't true of Mike Cooper, who, albeit possibly rather more adeptly, plays this sort of thing still, and is fast becoming one of the most unvarying musicians on the circuit. (Anderson I haven't yet heard in any other context.) Cooper is, by current standards, only moderately eclectic, and his feeling for Blind Blake's and Blind Boy Fuller's styles is intelligent and displayed without flashiness. Anderson, however, is more adventurous; the titles will indicate the range of his talent for pastiche. Garfield Akers's pounding rhythm he has off well; Tommy Johnson's guitar figures adequately; but in handling the material of Robert Johnson and Charley Patton he succeeds only in tarnishing, for a while, one's memories of two fine songs. Neither his inflexible singing nor his generally unsubtle playing does much to further understanding of the blues — the declared aim of most British musicians. The two group performances are more appealing, but, then, one has no singing and the other is not a piece that requires much sensitivity. Nevertheless, an LP of such music would be interesting to hear. As for this record, the fact that it's about three times as good as any of those dreadful Koerner/Ray/Glover sets of a few years back doesn't seem to me any more than a poor excuse for its existence.

TONY RUSSELL

DETROIT BLUES

HARVEY HILL, JR. AND HIS STRING BAND:

Harvey Hill (vcl, g) acc unidentified hca; p; d
possibly Detroit — c. 1950

She fool me

L.C. GREEN (vcl, g); Sam Kelley (hca-1); unidentified 2nd g-2
Detroit — Summer 1952

M-6009 *When the sun is shining-1*

M-6016 *Hold me in your arms-2*

HENRY SMITH AND HIS BLUE FLAMES:

Henry Smith (vcl, g); Eddie Burns (hca); Calvin Frazier (g); Washboard Willie (wbd)

Detroit — 1954

M-8407 *Good rocking mama*

M-8408 *Lonesome blues*

SYLVESTER COTTON (vcl, g)

Detroit — 1949

7024 *Ugly woman blues*

7032 *Sak-Relation blues*

MM-1927 *I tried*

SLIM PICKENS:

Eddie Burns (vcl, hca); John T Smith (g)

Detroit — 1948

3553B *Papa's boogie*

BABY BOY WARREN AND HIS BUDDY:

Robert 'Baby Boy' Warren (vcl, g); Charley Mills (p)
Detroit — 1949

RW-707A *Lonesome cabin blues*

RW-707B *Don't want no skinny woman*

F-1016 *Forgive me darling*

F1017 *Please don't think I'm nosey*

BOBO JENKINS (vcl, g); Robert Richard (hca); Albert Wither-spoon (g); Harry Fleming (d)

Detroit — 1954

U-7615 *Bad luck and trouble*

ANDREW DUNHAM (vcl, g)

Detroit — late 1949

B-7044 *Sweet Lucy*

B-7045 *Hattie Mae*

Post War Blue ® pwb-5 (46/-)

DISCOGRAPHICAL details listed above have been compiled from the details given on the

LP, drawn presumably, from label copy, and from the Leadbitter-Slaven *Blues Records 1943-1966*, but both sleeve and book are heavily indebted to the research of Ron Harwood and Sam Stark who have filled in much hitherto unknown data on the Detroit Blues scene. Their notes give valuable details on Green, Warren, Jenkins, Richard and others, and have a run-down on the activities of the various record promoters. This conspicuously adds to the importance of an album which is only the second to have been devoted to post-war Detroit blues, the other being on Blues Classics BC12.

It has been said somewhere — in *Blues Unlimited* I think — that Detroit did not produce a distinctive blues sound. I'm not sure that it matters whether it did or not, but in my opinion there is a steady-paced beat and a lowdown sound virtually impossible to identify in words, which is very much a part of Detroit blues. And there's plenty of it here, especially in L.C. Green's *Sun is shining*, Henry Smith's *Lonesome Blues* and Bobo Jenkins's *Bad Luck*, really beautiful blues, way down in the bottom. Two guitars, harmonica, and drum or washboard forms a typical Detroit group, and still did in the early-'sixties. Some items here are played by groups of this type, and only Sylvester Cotton and the unknown Andrew Dunham are solo artists. One of the best-known singers on record here is Baby Boy Warren, now a church member and apparently suffering from ill-health. He was accompanied by Charley Mills, a pianist very much in the Texas vein whose use of ostinato on *Lonesome Cabin Blues* is quite remarkable. This is a version of Curtis Jones's *Lonesome Bedroom*, one of those mystifying items which becomes greatly copied even though it has no great intrinsic merit itself.

There are more than mere echoes of Texas in the Dunham tracks with their Hopkins-influenced guitar tuned very low. Sylvester Cotton also shows this influence, especially in his freely structured *I tried* and to a certain extent in his thinly-disguised *Sak-Relation*. These men, like Bobo Jenkins, whose *Bad Luck* is almost as good as *Democrat Blues* (on BC -5) have a certain amateurism that prevents the facile structure of some of the more professional blues. One could go on, but space doesn't allow more than to say that for harmonica collectors this is an especially good buy, and it deserves a place on any blues shelf. Mike Rowe's policy of re-issuing interesting and rare modern blues merits every support.

PAUL OLIVER

DON ELLIS

AUTUMN:

Don Ellis (tpt, el-tpt); Glenn Stuart (tpt); Stu Blumberg, John Rosenberg, Bob Harmon (tpt, flh); Ernie Carlson, Glenn Ferris (tbn); Don Switzer (bs-tbn); Ira Schulman, Frank Strozier (alt); Sam Falzone (ten, sop, clt, f); John Klemmer (ten, clt); John Magruder (bar, clt, bs-clt); Pete Robinson (p, el-p, clavinet); Ray Neopolitan (bs, el-bs); Dave Parlato (bs); Ralph Humphrey (d); Gene Strimling (perc); Lee Pastora (cga)

Stanford Univ., Palo Alto, Calif. — August 1968

Indian lady :: K.C. blues

Ron Starr (alt, sop, clt, E-flat clt, f, picc); Mike Lang (p, el-p, clavinet) replace Strozier and Robinson; Roger Bobo (tu); Mark Stevens (vib, perc) added

Los Angeles - same period

Variations for trumpet

Frank Strozier (alt, clt); Terry Woodson (bs-tbn); Doug Bixby (tu); Pete Robinson (p, el-p, clavinet) replace Schulman, Switzer, Bobo and Lang

Los Angeles — same period

Scratt and Fluggs-1 :: Pussy wiggle stomp :: Child of ecstasy
1-vocal effects by band and others

CBS S (M)63503 (37/6d.)

DON ELLIS has already been canvassed as the "Stan Kenton of the 70s", and, musically, he has not been found wanting (though I feel the title "Maynard Ferguson of the 70s" has even more to recommend it — just so long as he doesn't take up residence in England around 1977!) Chronology is important, for the death of the big-band is symbolized and accelerated by the widening gulf separating it from small-group music, of any style still extant. Basie, Herman and Rich are playing 1940s jazz and, being virtually alone in this field, only draw inspiration from each other; if the Clarke-Boland and Jones-Lewis bands deserve praise, it's for their belated attempts to play 50s jazz, but who is there for them to influence? Certainly not Don Ellis, who is wedded to the 40s (like his former employer Maynard) with Herman as his source-book and Kenton as his bible. In other words, he's preoccupied with effect for effect's sake, and those who can persuade themselves he's doing anything new with the big-band must be more nostalgic than they thought.

What is the point of all the varied instrumentation, if it makes not a blind bit of difference to the sound? What is *Pussy wiggle* but a conventional flagwaver, with every eighth beat missing? And, incidentally, whoever heard of anyone's pussy wiggling in 7/4? (Just to digress into time-signatures, it's clear that Ellis needs that outsize rhythm-section to prevent everyone losing their place, and one of the soloists is able to play around with the beat or glide over barlines with any facility. As I pointed out in the Buddy Rich/Alla Rakha review in February, this is what jazz improvisation is all about, but the non-4/4 solos here only swing when they become as repetitious rhythmically as the ensembles — which is why these prime-number time-signatures sound much more natural in pop, and why Am.Columbia astutely put out a shortened *Indian lady* as a single). Some of the ensemble work is actually very exciting, but the only relaxed solo is Strozier's on *K.C.*, a 4/4 blues out of Parker, the inclusion of which shows that this is very much a something-for-everyone album. We even have a Harry James-type ballad, *Child*, and the 10/8 (not 5/4) *Scratt and Fluggs*, which is a private joke on a par with Gary Burton's *Beauty contest* on "Tennessee Firebird" (for what it's worth, I think Beauty contest is an alternate take of *Walter L* but with no holds barred). When producer Al Kooper, late of Blood, Sweat and Tears, writes "I save *Variations* for last because it is a major work" he presumably means in terms of length — in which case this is a major album, for it lasts 57½ minutes — or perhaps he means that *Variations* is in six sections, which is pretty impressive in itself. Unfortunately Section 1 is just Wide Open Prairies music, Sec.2 is Britten's second *Sea interlude from "Peter Gimes"* or near enough, Sec.3 is Charles Lloyd's *Sombrero Sam*, Sec.4 is Gil Evans and Sec.5 is Kenton in his heyday, while Sec.6 is back to the prairies at their prairiest. What are those California movie-producers waiting for when there's writing talent like this on the doorstep?

BRIAN PRIESTLEY

BILL EVANS

BILL EVANS

Bill Evans (p); Chuck Israels (bs); Paul Motian (d)
New York City — May 17, 1962

Polka dots and moonbeams :: If you could see me now
New York City — May 29, 1962

Re: Person I knew :: Very early
New York City — June 5, 1962

I fall in love too easily :: Stairway to the stars :: It might as well be spring :: In love in vain

Riverside 673 008 (37/6d.)

NOT MUCH need be said about this reissue of "Moonbeams" (formerly RLP428), for it still lasts 40 minutes, it still consists entirely of slow and slow-medium

numbers, and it's good Evans though not the best. It's funny that Evans was ever accused of playing "cocktail piano" (if you want to know what that's all about, see under Duke Pearson); his up-tempo work may be more invigorating, but his ballad performances bring out his scrupulous attention to detail and his particular aura of emotional integrity. The standards are well chosen and beautifully treated (*If you could see* presumably inspired by the Tadd Dameron session the previous month), and the two originals are charming rather than profound. If Evan's playing occasionally seems inhibited on these tracks, I suspect it's because of the inferior piano, which obviously remained untuned during the entire period of these sessions (the pitch of the actual recording sags briefly near the end of *I fall in love*). And, of course, Israels is notably less stimulating than Scott LaFaro, staying largely in the background here and even then doing the wrong thing sometimes. After their two LPs with Israels, it's about time Riverside reissued the Bill Evans record "Portrait in Jazz" — and how about including both takes of *Autumn leaves*?

BRIAN PRIESTLEY

JOHNNY HODGES ORCHESTRA

HODGE PODGE:

Charles 'Cootie' Williams (tpt); Lawrence Brown (tbn); Johnny Hodges (alt, sop); Harry Carney (bar); Duke Ellington (p, arr); Billy Taylor (bs); Sonny Greer (d)

New York City — March 28, 1938

- M793-1 Jeep's blues
- M796-2 Rendezvous with rhythm
New York City — June 22, 1938
- M854-1 Empty ballroom blues
New York City — August 24, 1938
- M890-1 Krum Elbow blues
New York City — December 19, 1938
- M950-2 I'm in another world
- M951-1 Hodge podge
- M952-1 Dancing on the stars
- M953-1 Wanderlust
New York City — February 27, 1939
- M977-1 Dooji wooji
New York City — March 21, 1939
- WM1001-1 Savoy Strut
- WM1002-1 Rent party blues
- WM1004-1 Good gal blues
- WM1005-1 Finesse-1
-1 Hodges, Ellington, Taylor only on this track
New York City — June 2, 1939
- WM1029-A Hometown blues
Billy Strayhorn (p) replaces Ellington
New York City — September 1, 1939
- WM1075-A Dream blues
Jimmy Blanton (bs) replaces Taylor
New York City — October 14, 1939
- WM1096-A Skunk hollow blues

CBS REALM (M) RM-52587 (25/11d.)

THE COMBINATION of major soloists at their peak, superbly integrated ensemble work, an apt varied repertoire of blues, riff numbers and a few ballads, and the overall imprint of Ellington's guidance — had had a hand in writing all but a few of the themes and was the major figure in shaping the final performances — has resulted in the 47 minutes of one type of perfection in jazz that we hear on this LP.

So much is notable on these tracks that one can only mention a few of the highspots. Apart from Hodges the most consistently arresting soloist is Cootie Williams, and in addition to his fine work with plunger on many titles one has the opportunity of hearing his majestic open tone on *Rendezvous*, and *Empty*. *Rent party* has what might well be one of Hodges's greatest soprano solos, while his alto playing throughout is a wonderful balance of lyricism, swing and unfailing good taste. *Good gal* has outstanding solos from Hodges, Williams and Carney and, despite the innocuous title, has an underlying menacing quality, while *Dooji* features Ellington maintaining a walking bass throughout, over which Williams and Hodges take assertive solos. *Finesse* has not previously been issued and presents Hodges at his most wistful, in

contrast to *Skunk hollow* and *Savoy* which have marvellous flowing alto solos in more aggressive vein. Brown's playing might seem a little bland in contrast to that of the others, but he does have good solos on several titles, coming into his own on *I'm in another* and *Empty*.

The recording is reasonably good, though the level of surface noise on a few tracks is high. With not a single weak track on the LP and many that are superlative, this is an unusually fine release.

ALBERT McCARTHY

JOHNNY HODGES/EARL HINES

SWING'S OUR THING:

William 'Cat' Anderson (tpt); Buster Cooper (tbn); Johnny Hodges (alt); Jimmy Hamilton (clt, ten); Earl Hines (p); Jeff Castleman (bs); Sam Woodyard (d)

San Francisco — November 13 and 14, 1967

Open ears :: Mean to me :: Doll valley :: Can a moose crochet? :: One night in Trinidad :: Night rain to Mephis :: Bustin' with Buster :: Over the rainbow :: Do it yourself :: The cannery walk

Verve SVLP(Ⓜ VLP)9219 (37/5d.)

BEING joint leader of a session with Earl Hines is rather akin to being joint secretary of a union with Mr. Clive Jenkins, and not surprisingly one gets the impression that, musically speaking, Hines made a successful takeover bid for the Ellingtonians.

The material is a good mixture of standards and originals, the functional arrangements being contributed by Jimmy Hamilton, Tom Whaley, Aaron Bell, Nat Pierce and John Marabuto. The ensemble passages are of the high standard that one anticipates from these musicians, and apart from those by the leaders there are a number of excellent solos from Cooper (*Open, Bustin', Over*), Hamilton (*Open, Doll*, the latter on tenor) and, above all, Anderson, who plays extremely well on *Open, Doll, Can* and *Night*, both open and with plunger. It is surely time that Anderson received some acknowledgement for being the fine jazz soloist that he is, though his reputation as a screamer specialist dies hard. Hines is in quite brilliant form throughout, taking dazzling, rhythmically complex solos on most titles, with those on *Mean, Can, Night* and *Do* outstanding by his own highest standards. He also plays superbly in his role of catalyst for the others — it is interesting when one talks to him to find that he still thinks of himself primarily as a band pianist — and Hodges, while not attempting to match him in the virtuoso sense, is prodded into some of his best small group playing for a long while. *Doll* and *Night* have superb solos by Hodges, beautifully conceived and sparked by a genuine sense of involvement, while even his shortest contribution on the LP avoids the blandness which sometimes creeps into his work. *One night* and *Do it* are slightly more casual than the other performances, but in general this is a very fine LP, with two great musicians at their respective peaks. Recording is very good, playing time 34½ minutes.

ALBERT McCARTHY

JOHN LEE HOOKER

I'M JOHN LEE HOOKER:

John Lee Hooker (vcl, g, foot tapping); Jimmy Reed (hca); Eddie Taylor (bs-g); George Washington (bs); Tom Whitehead (d)

Chicago — October 19, 1955

55-339 *Time is marching*

Reed out

Chicago — March 27, 1956

56-444 *Baby Lee*

56-445 *Dimples*

56-446 *Every night*

Quin Wilson (bs) replaces Washington

Chicago — March 1, 1957

57-634 *I'm so excited*

John Lee Hooker (vcl, g, foot tapping); Frankie Bradford (p);

Eddie Taylor (bs-g); Everett McCrary (bs) Richard Johnson (d)

Chicago — July 23, 1957

57-717 *Little wheel*

Taylor out; Joe Hunter (p) replaces Bradford

Chicago — June 10, 1958

58-927 *I love you honey*

John Lee Hooker (vcl, g, foot tapping); Eddie Taylor (bs-g-1); Earl Phillips (d-2)

Chicago — January 22, 1959

59-1067 *Maudie-1, 2*

59-1069 *I'm in the mood-1*

59-1070 *Boogie chillun*

59-1071 *Hobo blues*

59-1072 *Crawlin' king snake*

Joy JOYS (Ⓜ JOY)101 (24/-)

I HAVE always considered this to be the finest of Hooker's Vee-Jay LPs and its current avail-

ability at a moderate price is welcome.

The 1959 session produced several of Hooker's outstanding recordings, notably *Hobo* and *boogie*. The vocal over repetitive guitar patterns and foot tapping on *Boogie* is immensely effective, as is the unison guitar and humming on *Hobo*, both imbued with the slightly menacing undertone of Hooker's best work at this period. An air of brooding intensity also pervades *I'm in the mood* and *Crawlin'*, though some titles — *I love you*, *Little wheel* and *Every night* — are more extrovert in character.

Hooker makes astonishingly good use of what is at base an extremely rudimentary guitar technique, and his accompanying groups in the 'fifties were very able in supporting him without unduly highlighting the limited nature of his playing. Reed is heard in a typical but pleasant solo on *Time*, but much of the success of the accompaniments is due to the work of Eddie Taylor, a superb blues musician, who, according to Jerome Arnold in a recent *Blues Unlimited*, now lives in a state of poverty. The rocking, simple backings on such titles as *Little, Time* and *Baby* are greatly superior to the hyped up sounds that Hooker was usually given in later years.

That Hooker is a major blues artist few would deny, though on many of his recent LPs he has all but succeeded in disguising the fact. Whether he will ever again make records as good as this and other earlier releases is a matter of some doubt, but fortunately there is a fair quantity of his best work available at present. This is an essential item in any collection of post-war blues, with recording that is good if rather too liberally endowed with echo during its 34 minutes.

ALBERT McCARTHY

LIGHTNIN' HOPKINS/JOHN LEE HOOKER

THERE'S GOOD ROCKIN' TONIGHT!:

LIGHTNIN' HOPKINS (vcl, g)

The Bird Lounge, Houston — 1964

I heard my children crying :: Leave jike Mary alone :: You treat po' Lightnin' wrong :: I'm gonna meet my baby somewhere :: Don't treat that man the way you treat me :: There's good rockin' tonight

JOHN LEE HOOKER (vcl-1, speech-2, g)

Florida — July 7, 1961

Teachin' the blues-2 :: Two white horses-1 :: Talkin' bout my baby-1

Storyville Special Ⓜ 616 001 (25/-)

THESE Hopkins performances were originally issued by Guest Star, a company whose garish LP-sleeves and low prices suggested a Negro or 'poor White' market. It comes as no surprise, then, to find that the music is correspondingly way down in the alley, a welcome change from the somewhat restrained Prestige (Bluesville) and later sessions. It was recorded live, in front of a surely black audience, and the sound is delightfully warm and personal. (Contrast this with the uncomfortable "Hootin' the Blues" set (Stateside SL10110), made before white listeners.) Sam gives us some homespun philosophy, coming on rather like a downhome B.B. King (remember B.'s "Ladies, if you got a man, husband, or whatever you want to call him" narrative, on the "Live at the Regal" album), Yet, despite his obvious good humour, he is wholly convincing on sad blues like *You treat* — one of the most interesting paradoxes of the music. Brief passages like the opening chords of *You treat* seem to me to encapsulate much of Lightnin's quality — and thus give the hearer a fair idea of what the blues are about. Few releases, unfortunately,

have this effect, so I hope no one will pass this album over unheard.

Hooker's pieces allegedly come from the interesting Florida session, some of which appeared on the very good Atlantic set now available as "Drifting Blues" (590 003). *Teachin'* has a fascinating extrovert narrative, recommending the learner to "throw those fancy h chords away and just get that slow beat" — and this beat throbs through the three tracks, though I'm not certain that it is always Hooker who provides it; on *Talkin'*, for instance, it may (as *Blues Records* claims) be a bass guitarist. No matter, these performances, too, have the stamp of the artist's personality impressed on them, and they get through — to me, at least — with almost as much power as Lightnin's. This is an album of unusual emotional strength, presenting two very great artists at their most expressive.

TONY RUSSELL

HOT TRUMPETS 1924-1937

BIX BEIDERBECKE AND HIS ORCHESTRA:

Bix Beiderbecke (cnt); Ray Ludwig (tpt); Tommy Dorsey or Boyce Cullen (tbn); Benny Goodman, Jimmy Dorsey (alt, clt); Pee Wee Russell, Bud Freeman (ten); Joe Venuti (vln); Irving Brodsky (p); Eddie Lang (g); Min Leibbrook (bs); Gene Krupa (d); Wes Vaughn (vcl)

New York City — September 8, 1930

BVE-63630-1 *Deep down south*

CHICAGO LOOPERS:

Bix Beiderbecke (cnt); Don Murray (clt); Frankie Trumbauer (c-mel); Arthur Schutt (p); Carl Kress (g); Chauncey Morehouse (d); Deep River Quintet (vcl-1)

New York City — October 1927

I'm more than satisfied-1 :: Clorinda-1 :: Three blind mice, No.1 :: Three blind mice, No.2

WOLVERINES:

Bix Beiderbecke (cnt); Jimmy Hartwell (clt, alt); George Johnson (ten); Dick Voynow (p); Bob Gillette (bj); Min Leibbrook (brass bs); Vic Moore (d)

Richmond, Indiana — June 20, 1924

11930 *I need some pettin'*

IRVING MILLS' HOTSY-TOTSY GANG:

Jimmy McPartland, Al Harris (cnt); Jack Teagarden (tbn); Benny Goodman, Gil Rodin (clt, alt); Larry Binyon (ten); Ed Bergman, Al Beller (vln); Bill Schumann (vlc); Vic Breidis (p); Dick Morgan (bj); Harry Goodman (bs); Ben Pollack (d, vcl)

New York City — October 16, 1928

108565 *Futuristic rhythm*

108566 *Out where the blues begin*

ORIGINAL WOLVERINES:

Jimmy McPartland (cnt); Mike Durso (tbn); Maurie Bercov (clt, alt); Dick Voynow (p); unknown (g); Basil DuPre (brass bs); Vic Moore (d)

Chicago — October 12, 1927

C-1292 *Shim-me-sha-wabble*

C-1303 *A good man is hard to find*

C-1306 *The new twister*

BUNNY BERIGAN'S RHYTHM-MAKERS:

Bunny Berigan (tpt); probably Irving Goodman, Steve Lipkins (tpt); Sonny Lee; Morey Samuels (tbn); Sid Pearlmuter, Joe Dixon (alt, clt); George Auld, Clyde Rounds (ten); Joe Lippman (p); Tom Morgan (g); Arnold Fishkind (bs); George Wettling (d); Ruth Gaylor (vcl-1)

New York City — June 1937

Swanee River :: San Francisco-1 :: Prisoner's song

Historical HLP-28 (55/-)

DEEP, FROM A previously unissued take, was made when Beiderbecke's playing was in decline.

Despite this his solo is a pleasant one, though significantly Goodman's is a great deal more assured, but the performance is marred by a poor vocal. The same can be said even more strongly of *I'm more* and *Clorinda* — the latter partially salvaged by excellent solos from Trumbauer and Beiderbecke — but happily the vocal group are absent from *Three*, on both takes of which Trumbauer contributes nostalgic, gentle solos, and Beiderbecke assertive and adventurous ones. *I need* is one of the best Wolverines titles, with Beiderbecke in splendid form, his comparatively lengthy solo

showing how advanced his playing was in comparison to that of his companions.

The Hotsy-Totsy tracks are of hot dance music, though 'hot' is not a description that could truthfully be applied to Pollack's vocals. Goodman is heard to advantage on the theme of *Futuristic*, McPartland has reasonable solos on this and *Out*, but it is the eight bars from Teagarden on the latter that is the highlight of the performances. The Original Wolverines manage to generate a fair beat and produce lively music, McPartland — in the shadow of Beiderbecke — Bercov, Durso, and the guitarist providing reasonable solos. *Swanee* has tough muted playing by Berigan and a jump solo from Auld, *San Francisco*, a powerful Berigan solo and yet another mediocre vocal, and the lengthier *Prisoner's* more jump tenor from Auld, a fluent Goodman-styled contribution from Lixon, competent passages from Samuels and Fishkind and, above all, an enormously broad-toned solo by Berigan who also uses a plunger effectively on the theme and out chorus.

None of these tracks are on any currently available LP, recording is reasonable though somewhat lo-fi, and playing time 46 minutes. This is an interesting release with some rare material, worth the consideration of readers whose tastes are sufficiently eclectic to embrace the three featured musicians.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

DR. JOHN

BABYLON:

Dr. John Creaux (vcl); possibly Plas Johnson (ten); unknown el-harp-1; gs; p; el-bs; bells-2; tamb-3; percussion; female vcl group; Andrea, Beryl, Billy, Bunny, Butch, Dawn, Marzique, Terri, Troy, Troy Lynn (Juvenile vcl group-4)

Hollywood — prob. 1967/8

Babylon :: Glowin' :: Black widow spider-3 :: Barefoot lady :: Twilight zone-2 :: The patriotic flag-waver-4 :: The lonesome guitar strangler-1

Atco 228 018 (37/6d.)

FIRST, TO answer your raised eyebrow, this has been written to oblige an Editor. Secondly, don't rely on my discographical details; there were several sounds on the record I couldn't begin to unravel. Dr. John started quite an entertaining thing with his first LP, "Gris-Gris": underground-voodoo-rock with Creole patois and an occasional dash of Howlin' Wolf. The new album (arranged by Harold Battiste, Jr. — "a Sonny & Cher production") has shots of mock-Dylan, a kiddie chorus on *Flag-waver*, and other novelties. The involved lyrics are helpfully reproduced on the sleeve; the involved musicians (some of whom are only just reproduced on the record) get no billing. "Not at all together", wrote the *Rolling Stone* reviewer. I'll drink to that.

TONY RUSSELL

B.B. KING

LUCILLE:

B.B. King (vcl, g); Mel Moore (tpt); John Ewing (tbn); Maxwell Davies (org); Lloyd Glenn (p); Irving Ashby (g); David Allen (bs); Jesse Sailes (d); unk. female vcl group -1

Los Angeles — December 18, 1967

Stop puttin the hurt on me :: Rainin' all the time :: You move me so-1 :: I'm with you

As last, but Moore, McNeelys and Ewing out; Bobby Forte (ten) added

Los Angeles — December 20, 1967

Lucille -2 :: Watch yourself :: No money no luck :: I need your love :: Country girl

Stateside SSL(SL)10272 (37/5d.)

"WHAT I would really like", B. told Charles Keil, "is a band that echoes my guitar — like Ray's (Charles's) band sets off his piano playing. I've had guys do arrangements for me that weren't bad; and my musicians are O.K.; but they play standard things behind me. I won't really feel like an artist . . . until I get me some arrangements that really add a third part to my guitar and voice and make everything fit together just right."

I wonder if B. feels happy about this record. Maxwell Davis has worked with him before, but togetherness isn't the distinguishing

feature of the set, and "standard things" crop up all over the place. Glenn may occasionally be heard doodling pleasantly, but Forte seems short of ideas. B. is little affected: his playing is as cleancut and agile as ever, never out of control and always superbly phrased. And he sings with typical power and honesty. Few of the songs are impressive, but sometimes there are surprising combinations of old and new; on *Country girl*, for example, he sings of *flying* in to meet his girl, yet has to spend the night on a pallet on the floor . . . This piece, which B. himself arranged, is one of the best, but *Watch yourself* becomes rather tired as it wends its six-minute way, and unenterprisingly fades out. *Lucille*, too, I find unsuccessful; "unfolded in one take", say the notes, and most reviewers have promptly doubted it. Why not? The notes don't say it was *created* in the studio. B. has probably used this narrative for some time; it's certainly one of his standbys now. Admittedly it has, to use a fellow-reviewer's phrase, "considerable textual interest", but it's ten minutes seem to me a little self-indulgent, though I must confess that I don't believe in the long track.

The blues roll on, and nowadays in some rather odd directions, so it is good to have a man like B. around, for his awareness of the tradition and his place in it (see, again, Keil's chapter in *Urban Blues*) is acute. One day, I believe and hope, he will produce a really great modern blues record, probably in front of an audience, like the Regal one of 1964. But this studio job, though it isn't often boring, is finally unsatisfactory. I hope B. sees it that way too.

TONY RUSSELL

LOUISIANA PRISON BLUES

HOGMAN MAXEY (vcl, g)

Louisiana State Penitentiary, Angola — 1959

Duckin' and dodgin' :: Rock (me) Mama :: Hard headed woman

JOHN HENRY JACKSON (vcl, g); A.C. Craig (g)

same date

My baby got to go :: Tell me pretty baby

THE COOL CATS:

Arthur Williams (ten); Edward Davenport (alt); Robert C. Milton (p); Philip Amour (lead g); Fred Hollingsworth (rhythm g); Junior Jones (d); Robert Young (vcl)

same date

Goin' home to my old used to be

JESSE BUTCHER (vcl, hca); Guitar Welch (g)

same location — 1959/60

They'll miss me when I'm gone

GUITAR WELCH (vcl, g)

same location — 1960

Lonesome blues :: Boll weevil blues :: Bad luck blues

OTIS WEBSTER (vcl, g)

same date

Penitentiary blues :: Standing at the Greyhound Bus Station :: Ball and chain for me

Storyville Special 616 002 (25/-)

THE MOST striking quality of this anthology is the sombre, mournful — in short, *blue* tone of the voices. This must stem from the singers' situation, which was, God knows, and no doubt is, one that would give any man the blues; and because of this I feel particularly sorry that the sleeve-note tells us nothing of the men, their outside lives, their crimes and sentences. About these things the singers themselves are reticent; Otis Webster does perform the 'prison standard', *Penitentiary blues*, but this stands almost alone. (His version, by the way, is titled *Ball and chain for me*; the song called *Penitentiary blues* here is a rough reworking of Lightnin' Slim's *Bad luck and trouble*.) Other songs include several conventional — and of course relevant — 'Lonesome' or 'bad luck' blues, but many, perhaps with deliberate optimism, ignore the wire and guards and express sentiments that belong to life outside. Yet, as I say, the shadow of the prison wall seems to fall upon the singers and shade every voice. So, even when the song is fairly trite, there is this pathetic quality working on the singer's behalf. Not that many of the artists here need it; Maxey, Webster and Welch are a fine trio, and each has at least one very good performance. Each, too, reminds one

sometimes of their comrade Robert Pete Williams, who left Angola in 1959. The others appear to be younger men; they certainly owe more to modern influence, which is to say that — Angola being where it is — the Excello sound has rubbed off on the music here and there. Jesse Butcher is an undisciplined harmonica-player, and Jackson and Craig are fairly unadventurous guitarists, but, as I tried to make clear above, considerations of this sort seem out of place. To judge the Cool Cats on their technical ability would do them little honour; they get along together, and that's about it. But *Goin' home* is a marvellous creation for once the melancholy "West Coast" setting really works, and the alto solo is inexpressibly moving. There are many moments on the record which approach this — though of course it is an album which demands a certain mood — and I recommend it to anyone looking for blues with staying power. 47½ minutes, nicely recorded.

TONY RUSSELL

JUNIOR MANCE

LIVE AT THE TOP:

Junior Mance (p); Wilbur Little (bs); Rudy Collins (d)

The Top of the Gate, New York City — September, 1968

Before this time another year :: I wish I knew how it would feel to be free

add David "Fathead" Newman (ten-1, fl-2)

same date

That's all-1 :: Turning point-2

Atlantic 588 179 (37/6d.)

SOUL, THE monosodium glutamate of jazz, can rarely have been ladled out in such monstrous dollops as in these unending 36 minutes. Master of every cliché in the gospel/funk book, Mance hammers his way through three of the four items without hitting upon a single phrase that could conceivably be termed personal, and it is no exaggeration to say that in comparison his mannered work in those Davis/Griffin albums emerges as the epitome of adventurousness. The only respite is afforded by *That's all*, which features Newman on tenor, one of the few men on his instrument to be influenced by Johnny Griffin, he decorates the tune ably enough without making any real impact. *Turning point* opens with unaccompanied flute, but, predictably, it is not long before Mance and his fellow-clergy are back on the narrow, well-trodden and presumably lucrative paths of righteousness.

MICHAEL JAMES

CARMEN McRAE

PORTRAIT OF CARMEN:

Carmen McRae (vcl) accompanied by large orchestra. Arrangements by Benny Carter.

I haven't got anything better to do :: I'm always drunk in San Francisco

as above; arrangements by Gene Di Novi.

Boy, do I have a surprise for you :: My very own person

as above; arrangements by Oliver Nelson.

Day by day :: Wonder why :: Walking happy :: Loads of love love

as above; arrangements by Short Rogers.

Elusive butterfly :: Ask any woman :: When you get around to me

Atlantic Special 590 026 (25/-)

CARMEN McRAE is one of the better singers in the jazz-pop field, and, given the right conditions, she could well produce an exceptional LP. She has not exactly achieved it with this one, mainly because the choice of songs was far from ideal. Some of them do not suit her, others are simply not very good. The second is much the better of the two sides, with *Loads of love*; *I haven't got anything better* and *Wonder why* ending matters with a certain style. These are the old Broadway-type songs, in approach if not in fact, which suit Miss McRae, and she should leave the point numbers and the acid-rock or whatever it is called to the specialists in those fields. I tend to become embarrassed at the vapid poesy of pieces like *Butterfly* ('Footsteps echo softly in the distance through the canyons of your mind'), though this is the kind of stuff the Bob Dylan fans enjoy.

RONALD ATKINS

CHARLES MINGUS

REINCARNATION OF A LOVEBIRD:

Jimmy Knepper (tbn); Shafi Hadi (alt, ten-1); Wade Legge (p); Charlie Mingus (bs); Dannie Richmond (d); Jean Shepherd (narrator-1)

New York City — February 12 and March 13, 1957

Haitian fight song :: Blue cee :: Reincarnation of a lovebird :: The clown-1

Atlantic 587 166 (37/6d.)

ORIGINALLY issued locally as London LTZ-K15164 and entitled *The clown*, this record

was first reviewed by the Editor in our August 1959 issue and was subsequently commented upon by colleague Jack Cooke in the perceptive article on Mingus's Jazz Workshop which he published in this magazine six months later. Three of the four items it contains rank with the composer's finest achievements and the fourth, if in part a failure, must be reckoned an intriguing piece by virtue of its very audacity, and possibly tells us quite as much about the nature of his musical aims. Mingus is a man profoundly involved in his art, unafraid to use any device, however unconventional, if it will help him achieve a fuller measure of self-expression, and in fact many of those he pioneered in such earlier pieces as *Pithecanthropus erectus* are now accepted coin amongst today's self-styled revolutionaries. Basically, however, his methods involve the fusing of improvisation and theme into a homogeneous whole, and it is largely the success with which that process is carried through in this album which makes it so rewarding an experience. *Haitian fight song*, with its deeply committed solos by Knepper and Hadi, shows how wise Mingus was to use these men and indeed it may be doubted whether he has ever employed musicians more sympathetic to his aims. His own bass solo, unaccompanied in part, is fraught with characteristic passion, contrasting effectively with the sadder, more resigned feeling Knepper conveys and the jagged fragility of Hadi's lines. The recurrent double-time, loose ensembles, and stop-time passages are useful unifying elements but essentially it is the sustained brooding atmosphere of the piece, lit up by Richmond's electrifying drumming, that makes it at once so powerful and cohesive a performance. *Blue cee*, another twelve-bar, conceived this time in a rather less aggressive vein, has similarly good solos, and is particularly notable for the superb work of the rhythm section. The eulogy for Charlie Parker, *Reincarnation of a lovebird*, begins with a pot-pourri of broken phrases largely taken from Bird's compositions, but soon evolves into an elegant, keening melody of Mingus's own making. Hadi really comes into his own here, and Legge also contributes his best solo of the set. The whole piece conveys with uncanny precision an acute and recurring sense of loss.

The last item, *The clown*, is built up around narration by Jean Shepherd. Apart from a central section consisting of solos by Legge and the horns it depends for its whole impact on interaction between his monologue, which may be interpreted as a caustic commentary on the artist's plight in a hostile, materialist society, and the musicians' own contributions. This interplay is done very well — no platitudinous apeings of described actions are perpetrated — but Shepherd's voice, at least to English ears, sounds uncomfortably redolent of the popular music establishment that is one of the parable's more obvious targets. Moreover, the story-line is a fairly naive one and the effects suffers accordingly. These, however, are but minor strictures, doubtless rooted to a degree in academic prejudice, on what is, both intellectually and emotionally, an outstanding album, and in view of its excellence the playing time of over 40 minutes must be considered generous indeed.

MICHAEL JAMES

BLUE MITCHELL

COLLISION IN BLACK:

Blue Mitchell (tpt); Jack Remond, Dick Hyde (tbn); Antony Ortega (ten); Monk Higgins (ten, p, org); Jim Horn, Ernest Watts (fl); Miles Grayson (p, perc); Dee Ervin (org, perc); Al Vescovo (g); Bob West (bs); Paul Humphrey (d); John Cyr (perc)

Englewood Cliffs, N.J. — 1968

Collision in black :: Deeper in black :: Jo ju ja :: Blue on

black :: Swahili suite :: Monkin' around :: Keep your nose clean :: I ain't jivin' :: Diggin' in the dirt :: Who dun it :: Kick it :: Keep your soul

Blue Note BST84300 (47/5d.)

THEY TALK about jazz and pop coming closer together, but I don't think this is quite what they mean; in fact most pop is both more interesting and more complicated. The rhythm section lays down a simple vamp, trombones and flutes chant in the background, and Blue Mitchell plays his totally unvaried lead over the heavy beat. I couldn't tell one track from another — always the same simple themes, the same cleaned-toned trumpet, the same notes placed dead on the beat. A track here or there on Radio One might be not unpleasant, but a whole LP is an utter bore. The best moment is when the sleeve note writer apologizes lest his comments seem prejudicial, but he means prejudiced after all. 37 minutes; I suppose you could dance to it.

DON LOCKE

HANK MOBLEY

REACH OUT!:

Woody Shaw (tpt, fl-h); Hank Mobley (ten); George Benson (g); Lamont Johnson (p); Bob Cranshaw (bs); Billy Higgins (d)
Reach out, I'll be there :: Up over and out :: Lookin' East :: Goin' out of my head :: Good pickin's :: Beverly

Blue Note BST84288 (47/5d.)

SO FAR AS Hank Mobley admirers are concerned, the skies have been rather overcast of late; this release, a distinct improvement over the rustladen *Caddy for daddy*, makes for a few rifts in the clouds, but the sunshine, such as it is, seems more often than not as pale as it's intermittent. The weakest tracks, *Reach out* and *Goin' out of my head*, burdened with sugary guitar, brash but mediocre trumpet, and lazy tenor work, fail to transcend their boring melodic bases. *Beverly*, a nondescript ballad, is better because Mobley uses differing densities of tone to good effect, reviving with his clever variations the soft, pleading overtones of earlier performances of his in this vein. Once more, however, the piece is compromised by the unimaginative contributions of Benson and Shaw. *Good pickin's*, a neatly conceived item from the leader's pen, presents the guitarist in a much better light; its opening dialogue between Benson and the horns is followed by a solo from him characterized as much by its inventiveness as its technical expertise. Mobley, possibly aided by sympathetic material, improvises with verve, but gets lacklustre support from Higgins, who too often sounds below par during these 38 minutes. *Up over and out* and *Lookin' East* also struck me as being attractive compositions, and similarly draw something of his old zest and buoyancy from the leader, besides having better-argued work from an admittedly immature Shaw. Despite the record's several advantages I have yet to be convinced that Mobley's use of currently fashionable rhythmic devices has been justified by the results: to draw an obvious comparison, this LP is decidedly inferior to his 1961 *Work out* collection. It might, too, be refreshing to hear him in different company, with a tighter drummer replacing the perennial Higgins, and a more experienced man, Barry Harris or Duke Jordan for example, seated at the keyboard. MICHAEL JAMES

WES MONTGOMERY

A PORTRAIT OF WES:

Joe Bradley (p); Wes Montgomery (g); Monk Montgomery (bs); Paul Parker (d)

Chicago — December 30, 1957

2021 *Finger pickin'-1*

add Freddie Hubbard (tpt); Wayman Atkinson, Alonzo Johnson (ten); Buddy Montgomery (vib)

same date

Back to Back-2

Harold Land (ten); Buddy Montgomery (p); Wes Montgomery (g); Monk Montgomery (bs); Tony Bazley (d)

Los Angeles — April 1958

Far Wes-1 :: Leila-1 :: Old folks-2 :: Montgomeryland funk-1
Land out; Louis Hayes (d) replaces Bazley

Los Angeles — prob. October 1959
 6555 *Summertime-2*
 add Pony Poindexter (alt)
 same date
Falling in love with love-2
 Pony Poindexter (alt); Gildo Mahones (p); Wes Montgomery (g);
 Monk Montgomery (bs); Walter Bolden (d); Jon Hendricks (vcl)
 Los Angeles — 1959
A good get-together-1
 1- unknown brass dubbed; 2- unknown strings dubbed; Gerald
 Wilson (arr, cond)

Los Angeles — late 1968
Liberty LBS-83178E (38/7d.)
 IF WES Montgomery was as unhappy about his
 later records as one gathers, he must now be
 revolving furiously in his grave. Indeed, when the definitive history
 of jazz on record is compiled this LP will surely rate an honoured
 mention in the section devoted to malpractice, travesty and allied
 endeavours. The violins, which made money for Montgomery and
 his associates but which produced little worthwhile music, were
 not around when these sides were recorded, and Montgomery was
 still playing plenty of single-string guitar and obviously enjoying
 himself. In reissuing them, however, Liberty has commissioned
 Gerald Wilson to tag orchestral backgrounds on to each number.
 It is quite common in these technology-rampant days for solos
 and backgrounds to be recorded separately, but to provide post-
 humous accompaniment is another matter. In this case it is
 criminal. Montgomery may have been over-rated, though I still
 regard him as potentially the most gifted guitarist of recent years,
 and his output was always variable. Nevertheless, some of his
 finest work was contained in these titles and now they have all
 been ruined. *Bock to Bock*, for instance, included one of his
 most successful solos — long and passionate lines, beautifully
 played. Liberty, as understandably if ineptly, removed some of
 the surrounding solos, but the added strings have dimmed the
 lustre of Montgomery's tone and spoiled the feel of his original
 solo. It is no good justifying this by claiming that more people
 will buy the record, since anyone who wants Montgomery with
 strings has a wide enough choice, The music here should have
 been bequeathed to posterity as one of the few examples of a
 unique artist at something near his best form. RONALD ATKINS

ROUND MIDNIGHT:
 Wes Montgomery (g); Mel Rhyne (org); Paul Parker (d)
 New York City — October 5 and 6, 1959
'Round midnight :: Yesterdays :: The end of a love affair ::
Whisper not :: Ecaroh :: Satin doll :: Missile blues :: Too
late now :: Jingles

Riverside 673 009 (37/6d.)
 I CAN'T agree with Alun Morgan about the
 selection of Riverside releases, for this LP
 (formerly RLP12-310) and the reissue he reviewed in May are
 probably the worst records Montgomery made for Riverside. And
 it's all down to the inclusion on both of the wheezy steam-organ
 sounds of Mel Rhyne, and the fact that Montgomery was allowed
 to play safe with his regular Indianapolis group on this first New
 York session; as opposed to the subsequent "Incredible Jazz
 Guitar" album, he only gets off the ground on one track of this
 dull collection (namely *Twisted blues*, which I believe is a different
 number from that on the "Goin' Out Of My Head" LP). Dull re-
 cording too, lasting 39 minutes, with for some unknown reason a
 very premature fade-out at the end of *Ecaroh*. BRIAN PRIESTLEY

NEW ORLEANS OWLS/HALFWAY HOUSE ORCHESTRA

NEW ORLEANS OWLS:
 Bill Padron (cnt); Benjie White (clt, alt); Lester Smith (ten); Mose
 Farrar (p); Rene Calpi (bj, g); Dan Le Blanc (tu); Earl Crumb (d)
 New Orleans — September 24, 1925
 140992 *Stomp off — Let's go!*
 140993 *Oh me! Oh my!*
 140994 *The Owls' hoot*
 Frank Netto (tbn); Pinky Vidacovitch (clt, alt) added
 New Orleans — April 14, 1926

142019 *Piccadilly*
 142020 *Tampeekoe*
 142021 *Dynamite*
 142022 *Pretty baby*
 142023 *West End romp*
 Sigfre Christensen (p) replaces Farrar
 Atlanta — November 8, 1926
 143110 *Blowin' off steam*
 143112 *White ghost shivers*
 143113 *The nightmare*
 143114 *Brotherly love*
VJM Ⓜ VLP-21 (42/9d.)

NEW ORLEANS OWLS:

Same personnel as last
 Atlanta — November 8, 1926
 143115 *Eccentric*
 New Orleans — April 15, 1927
 143981 *That's a plenty*
 143982 *Meat on the table*
 'Red' Bolman (cnt, vcl-1) added; Hilton 'Nappy' Lamare (g,
 vcl-1) replaces Gelpi
 New Orleans — October 26, 1927
 145022 *The new twister*
 145023 *Goose pimples*
 145024 *Throwin' the horns-1*
HALFWAY HOUSE ORCHESTRA:
 Albert Brunies (cnt, ldr); Charlie Cordella (clt); Glyn Lea 'Red'
 Long (p, vcl-1); Angel Palmisano (bj); 'Chink' Martin (tu); Emmett
 Rogers (d)
 New Orleans — April 15, 1927
 143983 *Won't you be my lovin' baby?-1*
 143984 *I don't want to remember-1**
 Joe Loyacano (alt); Johnnie Saba (vcl-2) added; Sidney Arodin
 (clt, tin whistle-3) replaces Cordella
 New Orleans — April 26, 1928
 146206 *I hate myself for lovin' you-2**
 146207 *Let your lips touch my lips**
 Martin switches to string bass
 New Orleans — April 27, 1928
 146218 *I'll go back to that dear old pal-2, 3**
 146220 *Wylie Avenue blues*

VJM Ⓜ VLP-22 (42/9d.)

* Note: Titles marked with an asterisk are pre-
 viously unissued items.

VJM's LEASING arrangement with American
 Columbia clearly excludes the use of material

that the latter might itself consider reissuing at some date. One
 result of this has been that a few of the VJM LPs have been of a
 highly specialist nature, and reviewers, however sympathetic,
 have had to lean heavily on historical worthiness when making a
 final assessment. No such prop is required in the case of VLP 21,
 one of VJM's most enterprising releases to date.

The New Orleans Owls existed from 1922 to 1929, Rose and
 Souchon stating in their book *New Orleans Jazz — A Family*
Album that the leader was Earl Crumb, though Brian Rust says
 it was Benjie White in his sleeve notes. Around 1928 Eddie
 Miller was included in the personnel, and for most of its exis-
 tence it played at the Grunewald (Later Roosevelt) Hotel in New
 Orleans. From the earliest days the Owls was a cohesive group,
 its style having obvious affinities with that of the New Orleans
 Rhythm Kings with which it suffers but little in a straight
 musical comparison.

As a hotel band playing for dancing the Owls was called upon to
 use a considerable variety of material, comprising what we now think
 of as traditional standards, popular tunes of the day of the type
 of *Dynamite* and *Goose pimples* (both recorded by Fletcher
 Henderson incidentally), and a few originals of which *Meat* and
Throwin' are typical. A performance such as *The nightmare* re-
 veals a degree of sophistication that became more apparent in
 later sessions which, on the whole, make fuller use of scored
 unision passages, but from the earliest recordings these alternate
 with more 'traditional' ensemble sections. The soloists were not
 strikingly individual, but the clarinetists — I am assuming with

no certain proof that both solo — and Padron were highly adequate, the latter providing a firm melodic lead, and using relaxed phrasing in his solo passages which include a particularly good one on *West End romp*. The clarinetists show in their work the mellow, flowing quality that is so pleasant a part of the New Orleans tradition, while trombonist Netto, though seldom straying from the melody, reveals increasing rhythmic flexibility on the final sessions. The alto solos, if unremarkable, generally avoid the desperately square quality of most recorded at this period, and at the last resort it is the rhythmic buoyancy of the performances, bearing their date in mind, that lifts them above the average. The final session, notably *Throwin'* has some indifferent cornet work, and it seems likely that this is by Bolman and not Padron.

The second LP is shared with the Halfway House Orchestra, the inclusion here of *Wylie Avenue*, despite it being present on VLP 19 the result of the discovery of a near mint copy for dubbing since the latter was issued. This, along with the unpromisingly titled *Let your lips*, is by far the best of the six performances, chiefly through splendid solo passages from Arodin. Other tracks have worthwhile individual contributions but are marred by poor vocals.

Readers unfamiliar with the Owls' work will be surprised by the excellence of their recordings and VLP 21, despite recording defects on the first three titles that were present in the originals, is recommended for the consistently interesting standard of the music. The second LP will tempt, and rightly so, those readers with a particular liking for this area of jazz, not least as the result of four previously unissued tracks. Recording, apart from the defects already mentioned in connection with three titles, is of a reasonable quality, and playing time runs to 37½ and 38½ minutes respectively.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

NEW YORK TO CHICAGO 1923-1928

PERRY BRADFORD'S JAZZ PHOOLS:

Johnny Dunn, June Clark (tpt); Jimmy Harrison (tbn) — Brassfield (clt, alt); probably Garvin Bushell (clt); Charles Smith or Perry Bradford (p); Samuel Speed (bj); unknown (tu)

New York City — May 1923

1429-1 *Fade away blues*

1430-1 *Daybreak blues*

unknown (ten) added

New York City — February 1924

1668-1 *Charleston South Carolina*

1669-1 *Hoola boola dance*

CLARENCE WILLIAMS' ORCHESTRA:

Joe 'King' Oliver, Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Arville Harris (clt); Clarence Williams (p); Cyrus St. Clair (brass bs); Sara Martin (vcl)

Long Island City — November 1928

276-A *Hole in the wall*

277-A *Don't turn your back on me*

OLLIE POWERS' HARMONY SYNCOPATORS:

Alex Calamese, Tommy Ladnier (cnt); Eddie Vincent (tbn); Jimmie Noone (clt); Horace Diemer (alt); Glover Compton (p); John Basley (bj); 'Bass' Moore (brass bs); Ollie Powell (d, vcl)

Chicago — September 1923

1502-3 *Play that thing*

1538-1 *Jazzbo Jenkins*

1538-2 *Jazzbo Jenkins*

PICKETT-PARHAM APOLLO SYNCOPATORS:

B.T. Wingfield (cnt); Charlie Lawson (tbn); Junie Cobb (clt, alt); unknown (ten); Leroy Pickett (vln); Tiny Parham (p); possibly Jimmy Bertrand (d)

Chicago — c. December 1926

4053-2 *Alexander where's that band?*

4054-1 *Mojo strut*

TINY PARHAM AND HIS 'FORTY' FIVE:

unknown (cnt); Edward 'Kid' Ory (tbn); Artie Starks (clt, alt); Tiny Parham (p, vcl); possibly Mike McKendrick (bj)

Chicago — December 1927

20206-4 *Jim Jackson's K.C. blues*

20207-3 *A little bit closer*

Biograph ③ BLP-12007 (55/-)

BIOGRAPH, from the same source as Historical, shares the latter's habit of compiling LPs with rather meaningless titles that mix performances bearing little or no relationship to each other.

The first two Bradford recordings have Dunn's usual rather precise cornet playing and some mediocre sax and clarinet passages, but the second session is better and the blues atmosphere of *Charleston and Hoola* are scored, the latter having a trombone solo by Harrison that gives hints of his later eminence, but suffer through their rhythmic squareness. *Hole* and *Don't* are amusing, rather bawdy vocal tracks by Sara Martin, a competent singer in the vaudeville tradition who on this occasion gives her accompanists no opportunity for either solos or breaks.

Powell is another vaudeville singer and though he hogs *Jazzbo* in both takes does allow Noone to have some effective breaks. *Play* is a very different matter and is a fine blues performance with excellent Oliver-inspired solo work from Ladnier and a beautiful Noone solo in a completely mature style. Pickett-Parham use fussy theatre type scores, but is a cohesive unit and in Wingfield possessed an impressively fluent soloist who recalls Jabbo Smith's work during his contribution to *Mojo*. On the final two Parham tracks, Starks proves himself to be a better clarinet soloist than altoist, Ory has a good solo on *A little*, and again it is the cornet player — in this instance an unknown musician — who comes across most forcibly.

We have here one outstanding track (*Play*), several agreeable or interesting ones, and about five that fail to rise above mediocrity. The LP, with only average to indifferent recording and a playing time of 36½ minutes, will not seem a very economic purchase to collectors other than those who particularly want to fill in with some of these titles.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

DUKE PEARSON

ANGEL EYES:

Duke Pearson (p); Thomas Howard (bs); Lex Humphries (d)
New York City — August 1, 1961

Bags' groove :: *La carrousel* :: *I'm an old cow hand* ::

Jeannine :: *Say you're mine* :: *Exodus*

Duke Pearson (p); Bob Cranshaw (bs); Walter Perkins (d)

New York City — January 12, 1962

Angel eyes

Polydor 583 723 (37/6d.)

FOR THE first time in my life, I actually fell asleep while reviewing a new record — admittedly,

I was tired already, but Duke Pearson has all the tricks and all the non-ideas to guarantee a night in amnesia. As on his earlier Blue Note trip LP, his intentions are apparently serious, and various writings about him convey the impression of a sincere and dedicated musician, but he is betrayed by his lack of ability; the frequent hesitation and misfingering and the very boring touch he uses on piano demonstrate, once again, that "sincerity is not enough". As far as creativity is concerned, he comes on like a constipated Ray Bryant in *Bags' groove*, but the real give-away is *Exodus*, a coy Ahmad Jamal-type treatment. The 1961 tracks come from the same session as the equally boring Freddie Hubbard/Willie Wilson tracks on "Groovy!" (Fontana FJL136), whereas *Angel eyes* was originally included in "Hush!" (now called "Child's Play" as by Donald Byrd and Johnny Coles, Polydor 423 224) For all I know, it may be an alternate take, for Alan Bates has used alternates in reissues from this source (for instance, the title track of the Grant Green/Dave Bailey "Our Miss Brooks", FJL908, and possibly *Soul support* on Dave Bailey's "Modern Mainstream", FJL919, which also had two trio tracks removed from it — if these Tommy Flanagan items had been stuck on here, they would have shown how somniferous Pearson is). The album lasts 34 winks and *Angel eyes*, as well as ending in a premature fade-out, seems to be recorded at a much louder level than the rest, which gives the listener quite a start.

BRIAN PRIESTLEY

POP GROUP TO STORM NEWPORT!

Ten Years After



the first pop group to be so invited. They're very stimulating as a pop-jazz melange, bursting with ideas and contrasts and good music, including fine jazz blues and oddball Monkish piano

The Sunday Times



hear them on record

Ten Years After

I want to know, I can't keep
from crying sometimes,
Adventures of a young organ,
Spoonful, Losing the dogs,
Feel it for me, Love until I die,
Don't want you woman,
Help me.

Ⓢ SML 1015 Ⓜ DML 1015

Undead

I may be wrong, but I won't be
wrong always, At the
wood chopper's ball, Spider in
my webb, Summertime-into
Shantung Cabbage, I'm going
home *recorded live at*
'Klooks Kleek'

Ⓢ SML 1023 Ⓜ DML 1023

Stonedhenge

Going to try, I can't live
without Lydia, Woman trouble,
Skoobly-Oobly-Doobob, Hear
me calling, A sad song, Three
blind mice, No title, Faro,
Speed kills.

Ⓢ SML 1029 Ⓜ DML 1029

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